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SPORTS FASHIONS AS A REFLECTION OF THE CHANGING ROLE OF
AMERICAN WOMEN IN SOCIETY FROM 1850 TO 1920

The University of North Carolina at Greensboro

PH.D. 1985

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SPORTS FASHIONS AS A REFLECTION OF
THE CHANGING ROLE OF AMERICAN
WOMEN IN SOCIETY FROM
1850 TO 1920

by

Judith Elaine Leslie

A Dissertation submitted to
the Faculty of the Graduate School at
The University of North Carolina at Greensboro
in Partial Fulfillment
of the Requirements for the Degree
Doctor of Philosophy

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Approved by


Dissertation Adviser

APPROVAL PAGE

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It was the purpose of this study to show how the change of role and status for middle and upper-class adult women in American society during the years 1850 to 1920 was reflected in the fashions worn for participation in the leisure sports of bicycling, tennis, golf, horsemanship, and swimming. Two specific objectives related to the study were to determine the social changes that influenced the acceptance of women's participation in sports and to determine how fashions stylistically developed for each sport.

To determine how sports fashions evolved, a yearly examination of fashion magazines was made. The fashion plates and their accompanying texts were examined in the following: Godey's Lady's Book, 1850-1914; Peterson's Magazine, 1850-1897; Harper's Bazar, 1867-1920; The Delineator, 1881-1894, 1910-1920; and Ladies Home Journal, 1883-1920. A survey of general social conditions was made by reviewing period magazines, newspapers, and books, and current magazines and books on history of costume, leisure, sociology, and sports. The changes in manners and morals, legal status, suffrage, education, and reform orientation have been documented.

It was essential for new styles to emerge before women could function effectively in active roles. The development of sports fashion was based on a general need for both freedom of movement and revealment of the legs, two reluctant changes for Victorian Americans. Sports became strenuous requiring corsets to be abandoned and skirts to become less voluminous. Horseback riding, swimming and bicycling called for the development of bifurcated garments. The fact that forceful women were breaking out of the Victorian mold by participating in sports was a reflection of the greater struggle for rights which culminated in the national right to vote in 1920.

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Americans have generally agreed that the United States is a land of equal opportunity, or at least should be. But there are diverse opinions about the meaning of equal opportunity between men and women. Many people today agree that historically, man's place has been in the business world and the woman's place in maintaining the home and family.

Whatever one may believe about what is right and proper in society at any given time, women have ended up on the lower end of the status ladder. However, women have not been satisfied to retain the lower level of status and have struggled over decades to gain political, social, and economic equality with men. In this struggle, fashion has played an important part. Historically, women's clothing styles have expressed a certain subjection to men. According to Frances Russell (1892), author and noted reformer, any woman who kept in fashion necessarily remained in subjection to men. Her appearance contradicted any claims to equality with men because:

She asks for education, but she usually arrays herself in a style that suggests either the infantile or the idiotic. She seeks for work and good wages, but stands before the world fettered by her clothing and weighted

with unnecessary drapery and trimmings. She would engage in political affairs, but seems unable to apply common sense principles to the clothing of her own body. (p. 352)

In the nineteenth century, women's fashions placed considerable constraints on mobility and activity due to the tightly fitted bodices and the amount of fabric contained in the skirts. Women simply could not function as easily as men when they were wearing fashion-right clothes. The simple activity of walking up a flight of stairs was a challenge to fashionably dressed women. Skirts were long and heavy, and corsets were tightly laced, causing the wearers to faint easily due to inability to breathe normally.

Apart from problems of movement, to be in fashion required so much physical energy that American women in the nineteenth century were unlikely to have "sufficient resources" left over for the task of striving with men for equality. It required considerable expenditure of "physical and nervous strength" to wear the "ordinary distinctive dress of women" (Bates, 1892, p. 625). This ordinary distinctive dress wasted one's strength:

by reason of its weight, unevenly distributed over the body, and especially by weighting down the hips. Its length produces an imperceptible and constant friction on the instep and heels, - the equivalent to carrying a weight of many pounds, even during a short walk. The effort . . . to keep the feet from tripping upon the skirts and to prevent the dress from catching on anything . . . to hold it in place in the wind, rain or mud, is a constant drain upon the nervous force and draws from the amount of strength which ought to be given to more important matters. (Bates, 1892, p. 625)

In 1907, an English writer, Annie Lane, stated that women could not possibly expect to compete with men because they were martyrs to their clothes. It was also stated that women did not lack the intelligence to compete with men, just the time. Lane suggested that women should "abolish the wicked tyranny of clothes . . . and occupy any position they may choose" (p. 94).

If fashion does indeed help to keep a group in subjection, it can also be used to proclaim a rebellion against subjection. The relationship between fashion and social change is complex but undoubtedly a reality. Changing styles reflect the spirit of an age and at the same time help to legitimate and perpetuate various kinds of change. Fashion not only mirrors change, but also helps to seal the changes that have occurred.

Fashion can act as a seal upon a changed role for two reasons: first, because clothing functions as a form of nonverbal communication, and secondly, because of the total impact of dress upon the wearer. Those who study the psychology of dress (Anspach, 1967; Lauer & Lauer, 1981) have discovered that as people who are engaged in a new pattern of behavior adopt a new style of dress, the behavior and the clothes become identified with each other. It has also been noted that a new style can have a dramatic impact on the attitudes and behavior of an individual. Once a

style has been associated with a particular pattern of behavior, those who adopt the style will most likely adopt the behavior as well.

A new fashion indicates that the changed role has become socially acceptable and will remain as long as that fashion continues. Sometimes, however, it is hard to know which comes first, the style or the altered role. Historically, women have used new styles in an effort to bring about change in the female role.

Purpose

It was the purpose of this research to show how the change of role and status for American women during the years 1850 to 1920 was reflected in the fashions worn for participation in the leisure sports of bicycling, tennis, golf, horsemanship, and swimming. Two specific objectives related to this study were (1) to determine the social changes that influenced the acceptance of women's participation in sports and (2) to determine how sports fashions stylistically developed for each sport.

Assumptions

It was assumed that (1) the clothes for the chosen sports shown in the selected magazines were representative of the costumes worn by middle and upper-class women, and

(2) that the selected periodicals were published for the middle and upper-class readers and to illustrate sports fashions.

Limitations of the study

The study concerned middle and upper-class adult women from 1850 to 1920, a period of 70 years. References to occurrences preceding and following these dates have been cited when necessary.

Although there were many drastic and rapid changes that occurred after 1920, the decade of the 1920's was not included. This study was limited to what can be called the formative years in the history of women's rights, their changing roles, and their participation in sports as a leisure pastime.

Justification

Various studies have been conducted on the relationship of dress to social, economical, and political conditions in specific geographic areas, and others which traced the development of specific items of dress to occurrences in history. No studies were found which specifically dealt with dress for sport and its relationship to women's changing role in American society. Most of the studies analyzed some aspect of the women's rights movement, and traced some parallel dress trend such as undergarments or pants.

Abbot (1971) studied the relationship of women's dress to the social, economical, and political conditions in Knoxville, Tennessee from 1895 to 1910. Definite differences were found between dress and social class, both in their interest in clothing, and in their attitudes toward clothing as a status symbol.

Richey (1972) developed an attitudinal scale toward feminism. Dress was determined to be a positive indicator of attitude formation.

Carr (1971) studied the development of women's undergarments from 1609 to 1930. Abolition of restrictive underclothing was attributed to increased activities of women.

Watts (1970) traced the evolution of pants and determined that the lessening of social and religious strictures, the influence of sports and recreation, and the increase of leisure time were three of the social changes that influenced the acceptance of pants.

Schluskel (1969) studied the development of bifurcated garments for women of western civilization based on the relationship of pants and skirts in bathing costumes over a period of 100 years, from 1840 to 1940. It was found that changes in length of swimwear correlated to changes in length of everyday wear for corresponding periods.

Keiser (1975) studied the relationship of the women's rights movement and changes in the dress patterns of American women between 1848 and 1975. Achievement of suffrage seemed too distant and unimportant to women during the early attempts to warrant any change in dress. The women who wore sports clothing were able to justify it by the mere fact of their greater activity, and this acceptance of sports clothing did make all women more receptive to future change.

Kennard (1974) traced the history of sport for women in Victorian England and determined that women's sports became an instrument of social change by modifying and defining woman's larger role in society. A problem arose concerning suitable costumes which would simultaneously accommodate free movement and preserve the feminine ideal of the time.

The struggle for rights among women has been significant throughout history. As a part of this struggle, clothing trends have been very important. As women were allowed freedoms never before experienced, clothing continued to be an important factor in their changing roles. Sports participation was a part of the new-found freedoms, and as women began to actively participate in leisure sports, the need arose for sports fashions. Because of the new-found need for sports fashions and the knowledge that fashions mirror societal change, the area of sports fashions as related to the changing role of the American woman was considered worthy of study.

Definition of terms

Bifurcated refers to a garment having two leg areas.

Fashion is the style of cut, color, silhouette, and fabric that is socially prescribed and accepted as appropriate for certain social roles. (Barber and Lobel, 1952, p. 126)

Leisure refers to time free from work and duties.

Sports refers to a game, pastime, or playful activity involving a reasonable degree of physical exertion, and for which learning and practice are necessary. (Kennard, 1974, p. 1)

Sports fashions are clothes worn especially for participation in sports.

Procedure

In order to determine how sports fashions evolved, a yearly examination of fashion magazines was made. The fashion plates were considered to be fairly representative of the styles available to women. According to A. B. Young (1937) "magazine articles which are published primarily as fashion services and bought as guides to show how to dress, are truly representative of what is actually worn, if their circulations are large and their existence long" (p. 37). The fashion magazines used and the dates for which they were examined were Godey's Lady's Book, 1850-1914; Peterson's Magazine, 1850-1897; Harper's Bazar, 1867-1920; The Delineator 1881-1894 and 1910-1920; and Ladies Home Journal, 1883-1920.

Godey's Lady's Book, introduced in 1830, was published by a Philadelphia firm headed by Louis A. Godey. In 1837 Sarah Hale was hired as editor. Under her leadership, flagrant abuses of the rights of women as well as current fashions were pointed out in the Lady's Book. By 1887 the magazine explored the subject of employment for women and continued with its fashion emphasis as well.

Peterson's Magazine, a close competitor of Godey's Lady's Book, was founded in 1853 and published by Charles J. Peterson of Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. This was a magazine of literature, art, and fashion which did not take editorial positions on issues of the day. It contained colored as well as black and white plates of the latest fashions with descriptions of proper dress for all occasions.

Harper's Bazar was first published in 1867 (the spelling changed to "Bazaar" in 1929) and became a well established journal of fashion, literature, and household hints. Between 1909 and 1913, featured articles concerned the woman's suffrage movement and kept readers informed on national and international happenings of this movement. During the late teens the magazine gradually concentrated more on high fashion and put less emphasis on the home and the changing role of women. The nonfashion articles featured such topics as leisure, entertainment, and the arts.

The Delineator, published by the Butterick Pattern Company, was at first a pattern catalog with numerous articles about fashion and large numbers of illustrations. Other subjects, however, were added gradually to the magazine. In the 1880's occupational areas open to women were explored. By the turn of the century, The Delineator had evolved into a more general woman's magazine emphasizing fashion and also featuring material for the homemaker.

Ladies Home Journal began in 1883 and was published as the foremost women's periodical in America. By 1893, this magazine achieved the distinction of possessing the largest circulation of any monthly periodical in the world. Literary works as well as fashion plates, articles on fashion, sports and social life, and biographical sketches were included in each publication.

The fashion plates and their accompanying texts were examined in each of these five periodicals. A survey of general social conditions from 1850 to 1920 was made by reviewing period newspapers and magazines, current magazines, and current books on the history of costume, leisure, sociology, and sports. The following changes in women's role and status have been documented: manners and morals, legal status, suffrage, education, and reform orientation.

CHAPTER II

HISTORICAL REVIEW OF WOMEN IN SOCIETY

At the beginning of the second half of the nineteenth century women in the United States were without a recognized individuality in any area of life. No provisions were made for their education in schools in anything more than the rudimentary subjects. A professional career was unknown. The law demanded that any wife or daughter who, for one reason or another, did earn any wages outside the home, must turn them over to her husband or father. Frequently, fathers willed all property to their sons, completely cutting off their daughters. If the daughters did inherit property, it passed directly to their husbands. At the husband's death, a woman's property could be disposed of in any way with the exception of one third which was known as the "widow's dower" (Anthony, 1897, p. 902).

Women could not sue or be sued, nor could they testify in court. According to the English common law, which was adhered to in every state except Louisiana, a husband could beat his wife to the point of endangering her life without being prosecuted. Women were chattels, "not quite people" (Davis, 1971, p. 304).

The Sheltered Lady

By 1859 the Victorian concept of the "lady" had struck the socially ambitious middle and upper classes of America with major impact. The word "woman" had become a term of deprecation, and "female" was used as a noncommittal term referring to the financial, social, and moral standing of the person so designated.

The sheltered lady was excused from work, economic worry, and competition. She was shielded from poverty, impurity, and crudity in any form. She was not expected to "radiate sophistication, wit, or wisdom . . . these qualities had all come to seem a trifle unladylike. Her insulation from the world and the purity of her sex were the keys to her social place" (Wecter, 1937, p. 317).

The middle of the nineteenth century was a time of extreme feminism in the upper and middle classes. The Victorian ideal woman was expected to be passive, obedient to her husband, circumspect in behavior, and as attractive as possible. She was to be delicate and always give the appearance of gentility. Therefore, looking pale, fainting frequently, and suffering from the vapors were afflictions sought after by most ladies. Fainting was not difficult due to the tightly laced corsets. To achieve the desired pallor accompanying fainting, young ladies were advised to drink strong vinegar and eat quantities of chalk. Female maladies were also popular. Physicians insisted that

biological characteristics, refinement, and moral sensibility were the cause of these maladies. During menstruation ladies were to curtail all physical and intellectual activities. These same rules applied to pregnancy. It was believed that the baby drained physical strength and consumed mental energy. All exercise and expression of emotion had to be avoided.

Ladies were taught to organize their lives to compensate for the demands of their bodies. It was in society's best interest as well as their own. In speaking of the proper lady, S. M. Rothman (1978) said:

That women were at once the more civilized, the more moral, and the more virtuous of the two sexes and at the same time the victims of precarious health made for an odd duality of traits. Women were frequently sickly, temporarily insane, and always susceptible to mental and physical derangement - and at the same time they possessed extraordinary moral strength, saintly devotion, and exemplary virtue. The ideology rendered them at once incompetent and competent, broken and whole, to be pitied and emulated. But whatever the contradictions in this perspective, they disappeared in one grand edict: Women had better stay very much in their own sphere. They did not belong in the world of men. (p. 26)

The lady's sphere was the world of housekeeping, nursing infants, and the sick, training servants, teaching children, and supporting charities. Her home was her kingdom. She was taught from infancy to revere the male and was prepared from the very beginning to be the perfect wife. (Davis, 1971)

The lady's pastimes included painting on canvas or china, sketching, knitting useful items, flirting, playing the piano and guitar, and singing. Weekly soirees with cake and tea and hopefully a celebrity became fashionable and eventually led to the forming of women's clubs.

These clubs were for ladies "who pursue culture in bands, as though it were dangerous to meet alone" (Wecter, 1937, p. 320). It became fashionable to attend lectures on moral philosophy, chemistry, botany, and even mechanics.

By 1868 these clubs began to take an interest in social and civic service. Ladies began to feel the need for "better laws, safer social conditions, and suffrage" (The Independent, 1911, p. 794). Eventually these groups fought hard for women's suffrage.

There were other gains to be made by the clubs, however. Public playgrounds began in Boston when two public-spirited ladies caused a cartload of sand to be placed on an empty lot and encouraged neighborhood children to play in it. Many small towns owed their public libraries or city parks to dedicated women's clubs. Prostitution and saloons were attacked by these ladies. The Women's Christian Temperance Union, headed by Frances Willard, broadened their interests beyond liquor and prostitution to protective legislation for working women, kindergartens, and training programs for young working girls (Lifton, 1965).

The Fashionable Lady

Fashion played an important part in the lives of the ladies. It was instrumental in reflecting their social standing. According to Barber and Lobel (1952) "the clothes which all people wear have at least three functions: utilitarian, esthetic, and symbolic of their social role clothes are more or less useful, more or less handsome, and more or less indicative of the wearer's social position" (p. 125).

During the 1850's skirts were tiered, contained countless yards of fabric, were decorated with rows of ribbons, ruching, fringes or flowers, and were supported by crinolines which were made with steel hoops. These hoops allowed for fewer petticoats and eliminated all padding (Figure 1). The hoop shapes were oval or round and the extreme size made space a problem. Even large ballrooms became easily overcrowded. In an age when modesty reigned supreme, when women were supposed to be devoid of legs and ankles, a lady could lose her social standing by an accidental flip of the hoop. Her feet, legs, and underwear would be exposed!

This underwear consisted of bifurcated, shapeless garments that were known as "drawers" (Bigelow, 1979, p. 247) because they were drawn on. They were, however, also referred to as "unmentionables". Over the drawers, layers of petticoats were worn. The swinging of the hoop

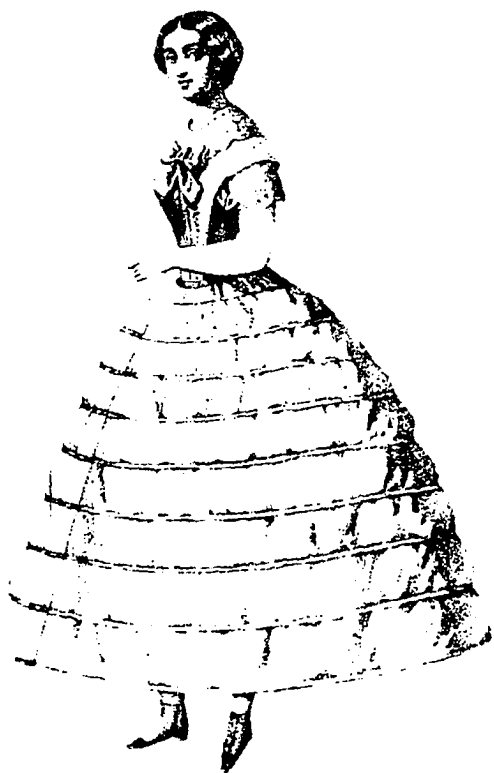


Figure 1. 1853

often revealed the petticoats, (but ONLY the petticoats!) making it necessary for them to become colorful and decorative.

Corsets were worn over a chemise and were laced and boned to give the wearer a wasp waist. Dress bodices fitted very tightly and had sweeping necklines that bared the shoulders and the upper part of the bosom.

In the 1860's the skirt continued to be bell shaped but began to flatten in the front. The fabric was folded into wide box pleats, stacked as many as three deep, and radiated out from the waistline. The hoop had to change to accommodate the changing skirt shape. Fewer circles of steel were used and were engineered to create a narrow width from side to side and a sharply angled line from the back waistline to the floor. By 1868 the front of the skirt was flat but an abundance of fabric was still massed in the back where it flowed into a train, as shown in Figure 2.

The costumes of the 1870's changed almost annually, and were "aggressively over-decorated and almost gauche" (Bigelow, 1979, p. 259). The silhouette went through three phases. The skirt of the late 1860's, already full in the back, developed into a high contoured bustle (Figure 3). Following this style, the bodice was lowered to the hips and the fabric in the back of the skirt fell from this lowered line. From the hips the bodice continued to drop



Figure 2. 1869



Figure 3. 1872

to the knees and then to the floor, creating the princess dress and a tubular silhouette. The most extreme examples of the princess dress were so tight about the knees that walking was difficult (Figure 4).

The slender figure silhouette led to the discarding of all possible undergarments, except, of course, the corset. Dust ruffles were sewn on the bottom of the skirts to function as petticoats and protect the hems from sweeping the streets.

Bodices continued to be tight. The shoulder line moved to its normal position and sleeves were simple and straight. Necklines for day wear became square or V shaped.

With the arrival of the eighties the back of the skirt began to bulge again and by 1884 had reached maximum extension. It protruded at the waist in a line at right angles to the body and was supported by various kinds of boned and padded artifices. Often the skirts themselves had boning across the back and tapes were attached at intervals so that when tied together arcs of fabric were formed.

Bodices were snug fitting and emphasized a rounded bustline. The waistline was at the natural level and sleeves were tight fitting, reaching to either the elbow or wrist. With all the fabrics in the skirt, the lining, dust ruffles and boned artifices, one outfit might weigh as much as 40 pounds (Figure 5).



Figure 4. 1877



Figure 5. 1887

In the 1890's the focus of attention was diverted from the skirt to the sleeves, which were the bulging leg of mutton style, and, to the bosom, which was full and round. The waistline level was elongated, pointed, and laced to the "point of distress." The flared skirt fell unhampered from the hips, and gradually flowed into a train. The collars were tall and throat encasing, severe in line yet feminine in trim. The oversized sleeves, tiny waists, and flared skirts established what was known in the vernacular of the times as the hourglass figure (Figure 6).

The corset was inflexible and had a built-in uplift feature for the bustline. Underwear was pretty and quite feminine, made of the finest silk batiste, embroidered in delicate designs, and trimmed with many yards of lace. Drawers were shortened and petticoats again were made to be seen. Silk taffeta was the preferred fabric because of the swishing sound when in motion and because it was indicative of wealth and affluence.

Continuing into the 1900's, skirts were bugle shaped. They were lined and interlined and worn with fewer petticoats to create a slender figure. A dust ruffle of buckram helped to hold out the hemline to give the desired silhouette. Skirt supporters were no longer used and the skirts flowed, falling straight and smooth in front with a slight train in the back (Figure 7).



Figure 6. 1896



Figure 7. 1906

Bustlines were raised and flattened into the shape known as the monobosom. Waistlines were at the natural position with a slight dip in the front. Necklines were high with stock collars that were boned to hold them high at the back of the neck while dipping under the chin. Bishop sleeves replaced the large leg-of-mutton styles.

Formal gowns contrasted with the simplicity and the masculinity of day wear. They had deep, lace yokes and were cut with sloping shoulders and tiny waists. Skirts had long, graceful, elegant trains and were lined with rustling taffeta. The skirts often had knee to toe ruffles on the front panel.

The 1910's were years of change in styles from season to season. Corsets were no longer needed to give a cinched look. Bodices became looser and more comfortable while skirts narrowed and draped more closely to the body. Some were very narrow, such as the peg top and hobble skirts. Slits were added from hem to midcalf so that the wearers could walk rather than hop. Just prior to World War I, hemlines were raised, revealing for the first time the feminine foot and ankle.

A change in the bodice occurred with the raising of the waistline. Wide belts were worn to accent the high waist and skirts were draped to give a broader hip and thigh width. Sleeves were dolman or kimono styles and necklines were oval or V shaped. Lace, ribbons, and bands of piping in contrasting colors were characteristic. By

1919 the total look was one of rounded curves of the natural figure emphasizing feminine roundness rather than the curves of perfection (Bigelow, 1979; Contini, 1965; Laver, 1951; Payne, 1965). (see Figure 8)

Women and Work

Women of the nineteenth century had no respectable alternative to marriage. Their destiny was wifehood for which they were prepared by their mothers from the day they were born. The alternatives to marriage were work at starvation wages, spinsterhood, or prostitution. (Davis, 1971)

For the vast majority work meant slavery in a sweatshop or factory, cooking, sewing, or teaching, all for one third to one fourth the wages earned by men. Once a woman became a wage earner, generally all social standing she might have had was lost, and she was barred from most of the social functions in the community.

The highest level on the social scale of working women was that of governess, but even so, "ladies would on no account invite her [the governess] to their houses as a guest: for she is considered by them of inferior rank because she has attempted to render herself independent by exercise of her talents" (Davis, 1971, p. 306). Very few women were sufficiently educated to teach. For those who were, wages were low. Wages consisted of room, board, and



Figure 8. 1914

\$4 to \$8 a month, a pitiful comparison to the \$30 a month plus room and board paid to a male teacher (Anthony, 1897).

For those who worked in factories, conditions as well as wages were deplorable. Employees were paid on a piece-work basis and had to work long, hard hours, often from 7:30 in the morning to 6:00 in the evening, six days a week.

The working conditions in the New York Triangle Shirtwaist Company were as bad as any. Five hundred women and 50 men worked on the 8th, 9th, and 10th floors of the Asch Building which were at least 100 feet above the street. The workers were so overcrowded that their chairs were dovetailed. Beneath every sewing machine the floor was soaked with oil and barrels of oil were stored on each floor. Bins filled with scraps were beneath every cutting table. Shelves and baskets were full of flammable fabrics. There was one narrow door on each floor which was kept locked for fear the workers would steal something. These conditions prevailed for many years until disaster occurred on April 20, 1911. Fire broke out and raged through all three floors. At least 145 women died in the fire or were killed when they jumped out of the windows to the street below (Rogers, 1949).

The pitiful wages earned by the "factory girls" were not paid to them but were given to their husbands or fathers, if they were unmarried. The man of the family was entitled by law to every cent earned by his wife or daughter.

Prostitutes were considered "outlaws" (Davis, p. 309) but were permitted to pursue their trade for the convenience of the male population. They were not allowed any civil rights, were protected by no laws, and could not be buried in hallowed ground.

The life of a spinster offered less inducement than work. Unmarried women who did not work were forced by society to remain as unpaid servants in the homes of male relatives. These women, like the working women and the prostitutes, were generally ignored by society. They were spoken of as "surplus women" who, when the numbers grew larger, were "sequestered in institutions where they would have their activities, their opinions, their wealth, if they possessed any, wisely controlled" (Davis, pp. 309-310) as a benefit to society.

Gradually, the position of women in the working world changed. By 1897 women were accepted by most institutions of higher education, and they were allowed to receive degrees in law, medicine, and theology. As business enterprises grew and record keeping, public relations, and communications expanded, there were new employment opportunities for women in offices. Women became telephone operators, typists, clerical workers, and stenographers. Anna Edith Updegraff Hilles (1896) stated in the Arena:

Happily it is now the fashion for women to become workers and to engage in any honorable occupation for which they can fit themselves, whether it be

trade, manufacture, a profession, the public service, or any other career for which they are competent.
(p. 265)

In time, work transformed the appearance of women. Until the number of working women reached the millions, no change took place. But after 1890 skirts gradually moved up from the floor and the neat and simple shirt waist and gored skirt became a working uniform. The most drastic change did not occur for women's dress until after the First World War when there was an upsurge in women's employment.

Women and War

World War I brought to the American people new conditions. No one was more affected in habits, in ways of thinking, and in prospects for the future than the women of the land. Women gained more and lost less than did the men. They were happy to find out how much they were actually needed. Not only did women take over jobs that had been considered for men only, but they began to organize activities of their own and began to view themselves as being so important that without their services the American armies would be defeated.

The war helped put to rest three sexist beliefs. Mary Austin (1918) called them "pet sex superstitions" (p. 611) and listed them as:

First, the superstition that the work a human being may do in the world is determined by sex.

Second, that the social value of a woman is established by what some man thinks of her.
Finally, that the man alone must support the family.
(p. 611)

Even though there were more opportunities in the world of work for women by this time, the war offered many more. Labor for women became both patriotic and fashionable. Women who had never worked before began to join the ranks of the work forces. Those who worked in lowly positions moved up into higher paying jobs. With the men away from home, the jobs had to be filled with women. Women drove taxis, ran elevators, worked on the railroads, became file clerks, and worked in war industries.

Munitions factories were forced to hire women to produce supplies needed by the military. Many of the operations required the physical strength of men. In the absence of men, cranes, levers, and trolleys were contrived for the convenience of the women workers. Consequently, operations were improved and businesses benefited.

Women's fear of the machinery made them take fewer risks, and it was reported by Austin (1918) that the number of industrial accidents was lessened. Women were not afraid to stop the machinery if necessary when there was a question of risk.

Many men were still obsessed with the idea of woman's place being in the home and not in the work force. Factory managers found that providing uniforms for the women

increased the respect of the men. The uniforms enabled the men to think of the women as "workers" and not "girls" (Austin, 1918, p. 616).

Many factories began to increase their demands for women workers. Rogers (1918) reported in The Forum that, according to the Bureau of Labor Statistics, women replaced 1,413,000 men in the years 1914 to 1918, and of that number, 530,000 were in the war industries alone.

Another area of labor shortage occurred on the farms in 22 states. The Woman's Land Army of America came into being through the energy of the Woman's National Farm and Garden Association. This group of women was made up from garden clubs all over the United States. They were patriotic women who, enlisting in the Woman's Land Army, pledged themselves to work on the farms in any capacity in which the farmers needed them.

Rogers (1918) told of the Woman's Agricultural Camp at Bedford, New York, as the best example of how the Woman's Land Army worked. The women lived in a central camp and were taken by automobile to the farms where they were needed. They worked for eight hours a day performing such tasks as milking and feeding the animals as well as other required agricultural tasks. They worked in squads of six or eight, each squad having a captain, whose duty it was to see that everyone performed her assigned task. The wages were \$15

a month. The farmers paid the camp \$2 a day or 25¢ an hour for the women's work. Two dollars a day was the calculated wage required as normal for men in farm labor.

The camp had 24 women workers. They served 99 employers: 17 farmers, 46 large estates and modern farms, 34 small home gardens, and two community and public gardens. Their uniforms were blue overalls, blue work shirts, cotton gloves, shade hats, and stout shoes. All items except the shoes were furnished by the camp.

No woman could join the Woman's Land Army without a physician's statement of good health. They proved, by actually gaining in health while at work, that the hard labor was physically beneficial to them rather than detrimental.

Many of the women who were employed during the war had husbands overseas and wanted to work hard to forget their loneliness. Others thought only of the munitions, food, or clothing needed by the military. Emily Newell Blair (1919), a member of the Council of National Defense, reported that in Rochester, New York, three hundred women did not show up for work the day after the signing of the armistice. They considered their work as emergency work only, and the emergency had passed.

After the war many women were satisfied to return home or to their former jobs. Others, however, being accustomed to the higher wages usually earned by men, and having learned to live independently, were not willing to give it

all up. They had proven that they were important to society, that there was more to the war effort than fighting on the battlefield. Not only did they work as nurses in the camps and hospitals and make bandages of clothing, but they bore the burdens of society made necessary by the absence of men. They felt that if they could be worthwhile to society during wartime, they could be worthwhile at any time.

Feminine Suffrage

The first woman's rights meeting in American history was held in a Methodist church in Seneca Falls, New York, on July 19, and 20, 1848. Six days prior to the meeting, the women responsible for it, Elizabeth Cady Stanton, Lucretia Mott, Martha Wright, and Ann McClintock (Catt & Schuler, 1926) met to prepare their Declaration of Sentiments. Modeled like the Declaration of Independence, there were eleven resolutions that expressed the aims of the meeting. The ninth resolution, the one most revolutionary, stated: "Resolved, that it is the duty of the women of this country to secure to themselves the sacred right to the elective franchise" (Rossi, 1973, p. 241). This resolution, carried by a small margin, was the only one not accepted unanimously. It was the most controversial issue and became the rallying point of the movement throughout the next several decades. At the conclusion of the meeting a third of those present, men as well as women, had signed their names to the Declaration. Among them was Charlotte Woodward, the only

one in attendance who lived to vote for the President of the United States in 1920 (Flexner, 1959).

The controversy that the meeting created was widespread. Clergymen were alarmed and denounced the "masculine, strong-minded women" who were attempting to drive men from their "God-oriented sphere" (Catt & Schuler, 1926, p. 21). The press greeted the movement with ridicule and took sides contributing both understanding and confusion to the issues.

There were other meetings and conventions with participating individuals such as Susan B. Anthony and Lucy Stone. The women lectured in all parts of the country on antislavery, temperance, physiology, and women's rights and drew large audiences of both men and women.

What was known as "the wave of temperance excitement" (Catt & Schuler, 1926, p. 22) passed over the country from 1852 to 1855. Arguments on women's place in society were taking place in the temperance societies. At a Sons of Temperance meeting in 1852 in Albany, New York, where Daughters of Temperance members had been gallantly admitted, Susan B. Anthony rose to speak to a motion and was informed that the sisters were invited to listen and learn but not to speak. Indignant, the women withdrew and formed the Woman's State Temperance Society with Elizabeth Cady Stanton as president and Susan B. Anthony as secretary. Several other states followed New York's example and formed similar societies.

Later that same year the New York State Temperance Convention was held in Syracuse and Susan B. Anthony and Amelia Bloomer, delegates from the Women's State Temperance Society, were refused admission. The women had an unintentional revenge, however, when a liberal clergyman offered his church for a meeting and announced publicly that the two rejected delegates would speak there. The convention was deserted and the church was packed.

From 1850 to 1860, a national suffrage convention was held in the United States each year, with the exception of 1857. State organizations developed from these conventions. These organizations were instrumental in getting many bills for women's rights passed by State Legislatures. These bills included women's rights to their earnings, their property, and their children.

Women had proved their value as reform propagandists and leaders of the abolition, and temperance movements were eventually united in recognizing that fact. In political interest woman's suffrage was second only to the question of slavery. The goal was in sight. But before the next convention could meet the nation was involved in the slavery issue and the Civil War. Woman's suffrage had to wait.

The leaders of woman's suffrage were as much fighters for antislavery as for woman's rights and immediately devoted themselves to the war effort. After the war ended, their demands for equal rights and for the right to vote

were resumed. The Republican party was expected to respond favorably out of respect for the women's war efforts. To their dismay the political leaders informed the women that "this is the Negro's hour" and the "women must wait for their rights" (Kraditor, 1965, p. 3).

The women disagreed among themselves as to how the Fourteenth Amendment which inserted the word male into the Constitution for the first time should be viewed. Some felt the amendment should be defeated and others felt that, if women could not win their political freedom, at least it was good that Negro men could. Consequently, in 1869, two separate organizations developed: the National Woman Suffrage Association, led by Elizabeth Cady Stanton and Susan B. Anthony, and the American Woman Suffrage Association led by Henry Ward Beecher and Lucy Stone. The split lasted until 1890 when they joined to form the National American Woman Suffrage Association.

From 1890 until 1910 women's clubs proliferated, women factory workers increased in numbers, women college graduates were accepted more and more by society. As new household inventions changed the life styles of middle-class women, they were dissatisfied with their traditional activities. In 1910, Washington was the first to adopt an amendment to its state constitution allowing women to vote and by 1920 all 36 states had ratified the national amendment. Women

had won. They were legally accorded virtually the same political rights as men.

Early Dress Reform

Dress was a controversial issue during the early days of the Woman's Suffrage Movement. Feminist objections to dress styles were partially based on feminine health. Both doctors and educators warned of the hazards of tight lacings, heavy petticoats, dirt-gathering long skirts and tight garters. In a speech before the New England Women's Club, Elizabeth Stuart Phelps (Russell, 1892) summed up the criminal nature of dress in the nineteenth century by saying:

. . . when I see women's skirts, the shortest of them, lying (when they sit down) inches deep along the foul floors, which man . . . had inundated with tobacco juice, and from which she sweeps up and carries to her home the germs of stealthy pestilences; when I see a ruddy, romping school girl, in her first long dress . . . afraid of the stone walls in the blueberry fields, or standing aloof from the game of ball, or turning sadly away from the ladder which her brother is climbing to the cherry tree . . .; when I read of the sinking steamers at sea, with nearly all the women and children on board, and the accompanying comments, 'Every effort was made to assist the women . . . but they could not climb, and we were forced to leave them to their fate;' . . . when I consider these things, I feel that I have ceased to deal with blunders in dress and have entered the category of crime. (p. 333)

Following this speech a dress reform committee was appointed by the New England Woman's Club and lectures were delivered in Boston by four women physicians. In all the lectures the dress of the day was condemned as unhealthful. Each

lady gave strong warning against corsets and heavy, layered petticoats that restricted walking.

In Chicago the Physical Culture and Correct Dress Society condemned the corset and heavy skirts also. One of their rules for determining the value of a gown was "is the dress loose enough to permit free and graceful movement . . .?" (Russell, 1894, p. 308).

The effort to find an alternative form of dress had considerable support on practical, medical, and aesthetic grounds. The first costume that appeared to provide the desired alternative was the Bloomer, introduced in 1851. It was similar to the styles that had been adopted by some of the communitarian groups, such as the Oneida Community and the Shakers, as well as looking much like the Turkish styles of dress. James Laver (1953) described it as:

. . . of changeable figured silk, . . . extending two or three inches below the knee . . . close sleeves . . . wrought muslin wristlets about two inches in width . . .; trousers, same material as dress, gathered closely at the ankle and just covering the top of the Congress Gaiter The style of the trousers may be described as Turkish. (p. 154)

The costume was originated by Elizabeth Smith Miller who explained why she designed the dress by saying:

It was in the fall of 1850 that I adopted the short skirt after years of annoyance in wearing the long, heavy skirt and of dissatisfaction with myself for submitting to such bondage I became desperate and resolved on immediate release (Kraditor, 1968, p. 123)

The dress was named for Mrs. Amelia Bloomer, a friend of Elizabeth Cady Stanton (Elizabeth Miller's cousin), who adopted it and began publicizing it in her temperance magazine, The Lily, the first paper published for and devoted to the interest of women. It became one of the most influential journals of its time due to articles by Elizabeth Cady Stanton, Susan B. Anthony, and Amelia Bloomer on women's rights, dress reform, and temperance. Mrs. Bloomer saw no reason for people not to accept the new costume, since it was similar in style to dress bodices of the day, but she failed to realize the effect the short skirt and trousers would have on the public.

Women who wore the Bloomer costume were the subject of church sermons and were evicted from the churches. The clergy based their rejection of the wearing of the Bloomer on a verse in the Bible, Deuteronomy 22:5. The King James version states:

The women shall not wear that which pertaineth unto a man, neither shall a man put on a woman's garment; for all that do are abomination unto the Lord thy God. (p. 198)

Although the Bloomer outfit was highly ridiculed, it created much interest and was a topic that dominated conversation and received newspaper headlines all over the country. The papers were filled with activities where Bloomers were involved: at church, on picnics, at balls,

and theatrical productions; or Bloomer melodies, waltzes, and polkas (Lauer & Lauer, 1981).

Feminists supported the Bloomer on several grounds, but especially for health and practicality. Mrs. Amelia Bloomer asserted that radical reform in the realm of women's clothes was needed so a woman might become the "free, healthy being God made her instead of the corseted, crippled, dragged down creature her slavery to clothes had made her" (Bloomer, 1895, p. 78).

Many supported the Bloomer because they felt it was morally right or patriotic to do so. A few simply liked the way it looked, and others urged that it be adopted on the grounds that it was a practical and convenient style of dress. Women lecturers wore the Bloomer dress as they advocated the emancipation of their sex.

But the Bloomer effort faded quickly. As a fashion, it lasted only one year. By the end of 1851, only a handful of women continued to wear the Bloomer, one of whom was Mrs. Amelia Bloomer, who continued to wear the costume for eight years. Its adoption by women was identified with radical tendencies and linked to the women's movement. Society was not ready for a self-thinking, self-sufficient woman. Mrs. Bloomer died on December 30, 1894, before she had the opportunity to see the Bloomer adopted for sportswear in the mid-1890's. She was about 40 years ahead of her time.

Although this particular dress reform failed to be adopted at the time of its introduction, it did have a lasting effect. In the 1860's the Bloomer appeared in bathing dresses; in the 1890's it appeared for cycling dresses, and bloomers were later adopted by many colleges as required dress for physical education classes.

The movement for more sanitary and functional clothing for women continued. Throughout the years there have been successes and failures in the history of dress reform for women, but the freedom of modern dress owes a debt of gratitude to the gallant ladies who led the first revolt.

CHAPTER III

LEISURE SPORT PARTICIPATION BY WOMEN

Historical Background

During the nineteenth century, sport was a male domain. That could only be expected because the exclusion of women from sport parallels the exclusion of women from other areas of society such as business, medicine, and law. Males dominated all of society. The American idealization of women that justified female exclusion developed from the idealization of upper-class women in Victorian England. It sanctified women as porcelaine figurines mounted on pedestals, above the realities of life: fragile, delicate, and beautiful, for men to admire and care for. O'Neil (1971) described the Victorian ideal:

The Victorians had attempted . . . to compensate women for their increased domestic and pedagogic responsibilities by enveloping them in a mystique which asserted their higher status while at the same time guaranteeing their actual inferiority They taught women to think of themselves as a special class While the Victorian conception of women as wan, ethereal, spiritualized creatures bore a little relation to the real world where women operated machines, worked the fields, hand washed clothing, and toiled over kitchen stoves, it was endorsed by both science and religion Feminine delicacy was considered visible evidence of their superior sensibilities, the 'finer clay' of which they were made. Women who were not delicate by nature became so by design. (pp. 4-8)

Once the ideal was accepted women were under great pressure to behave accordingly. Passiveness, obedience to husband, circumspectness of behavior, and attractiveness were necessary to maintain the expected image of womanhood. By avoiding exercise and cultivating a pale face one gave the appearance of gentility.

The Victorian ideal was completely opposite to sport in many ways. The ideal required delicacy; sport required vigor. The ideal required modesty, propriety, and circumspectness; sport took participants out of the house and placed them in positions where their skin was exposed to the elements and their emotions were expressed. The ultimate goal for the Victorian ideal was to attract a man and bear his children; sport exposed the face and reproductive organs to possible injury. Consequently, medical issues were an outgrowth of the Victorian ideal.

One of the major medical issues centered around physical activity during the menstrual period. During menstruation all physical and intellectual activities were to be curtailed. All exercise and expression of emotion had to be avoided. Doctors believed that because the uterus was physiologically congested it was "temporarily abnormally heavy" (Gerber, Felshin, Berlin, & Wyrick, 1974, p. 16) and was liable to be displaced by any strenuous or rough activity.

Some physicians spoke out in favor of exercise. Neesen (1899) advocated that menstrual "disorders" were more common than they should be and that exercise would help by improving the tone of the pelvic organs. Fenton (1896) believed that ninety percent of the diseases of women were "functional ailments begotten of ennui and lack of opportunity of some means of working off their superfluous muscular, nervous, and organic energy" (p. 800). Nervousness, hot flashes, cold hands and feet, flushing, etc., were all attributed to a "local disturbance probably in the ovaries" (Neesen, p. 75). The name given to these symptoms was Hysteria, which is derived from the Greek word "Hyster" meaning uterus, and was applied to any disturbance of the nervous equilibrium emanating from the uterus (Neesen, p. 75).

Both Fenton and Neesen believed that exercise would cure other female complaints such as headaches, backaches, constipation, malaise, and menopause. In summarizing his philosophy of exercise, Neesen stated:

The future . . . for women is even more promising . . . what is done by the present generation will have its effect on future generations. With healthier women will come healthier children. And childbearing itself will be easier. As the health of woman increases, she will acquire stronger muscles and steadier nerves. Her menstrual periods will tend to become painless. And last, but not least, she will wear a more hygienic dress - an epoch toward which the female world has been struggling (pp. 78-79)

The consensus of doctors such as Neesen (1899) and Fenton (1896) about poor health led to considerable encouragement for women to take part in sports. Thus the medical issues influenced sport in a positive way during the nineteenth century. But as women passed the point of exercising for their health and started to participate with intensity, the effect of the medical issues became negative and inhibiting. The view that women are strong and capable of successful participation in most sports is contemporary and has been accepted only after generations of women have proved by their actions that no harm would come to them (Gerber, 1974).

Social changes during the nineteenth century caused by specific events changed women's roles markedly. Women began entering colleges. They played prominent parts in the abolition movement, in the temperance movement, in the suffrage movement, and in the labor movement. The combination of all of these events helped to bring about a new position for women generally, and therefore, for women interested in sports specifically.

The attitudes of the American public changed toward women. The Victorians were correct to assume that in order to preserve their ideal, women had to be kept in their homes. With an increase in women students and workers, an increase in women moving out of their homes and living alone, the increase in the belief that suffrage symbolized the equity

of the sexes, and the model of the successful suffragettes, the Victorian ideal began to give way to a more modern view of woman's place in society (Gerber, 1974).

In 1850 acceptable activities for women were relatively few in number. Vigorous activities were not yet developed for women. Their clothing did not permit much movement; therefore the activities available to them required little effort and could be participated in without acquiring an indelicate sweat.

The primary purpose of early sports for women was the opportunity for a respectable social encounter with men. The activities were out of doors and were essentially for those who had leisure time and the finances to belong to clubs which had the facilities for such activities as lawn tennis, golf, croquet, and horseback riding. Bathing and swimming were also included during this early period. The bicycle became immensely popular near the end of the century.

Schools began to sponsor physical education classes and sports, and women who went to college participated. Mount Holyoke had exercise and physical education classes as early as 1837, Vassar in 1868, and Smith and Wellesley in 1875. According to Smith's 1875 catalog the physical education classes were offered "not merely to secure health, but also a graceful carriage, and well formed bodies" (Gerber, 1974, p. 50).

Society's attitude toward the feminine ideal gradually changed. In an article in Godey's Lady's Book (July, 1884) entitled "The Athletic Age," the author related this change:

There was a time which most of us remember, when feminine accomplishments had a range wholly different from what they have now. The whole charm of fashionable womanhood once lay in that sweet assiduous langour which suggests a flower like frailty and a disposition too delicately refined to bear the bustle of life on the ordinary plane In this enlightened era of society, the Amazon type is much more admired than the statuesque loveliness of a drowsy Cleopatra In a word, this is an athletic era, and it is the fashion in elegant society to affect all the rousing, rollicking sports which were once the censured pastimes of a hoyden. (p. 204)

The editor of Peterson's (October, 1868) also spoke of this change:

Womanly sports, such as croquet, riding on horseback rowing, bowling, skating, etc., are becoming every year more popular. American women, in consequence, are acquiring greater breadth of chest, elasticity of carriage, and general vigor and constitution. The sex is beginning to find out that even the intellect, to say nothing of other charms, is improved by judicious out of door exercise. The ideal fine lady of the last generation, a woman with pale cheeks, hollow chest, and bulging forehead, has passed away, never, we hope, to return. Consumption and early death was Nature's protest and revenge against such mistaken ideals. (p. 308)

The early physical activities for women were important, not only because sport engaged them in healthful, needed physical activity, but because it brought them out of their homes into society. Once women began participating actively, the social contact helped to loosen some of the strangling ties of propriety which had enveloped them. Sport

participation gradually became socially sanctioned and eventually commonplace.

Horseback Riding: 1850 to 1920

Horseback riding was considered the most healthful and fashionable exercise of the time for women. In 1854, the author of The Lady's Equestrian Manual, noted that it was a time "when riding has become so eminently fashionable an exercise among the ladies and when the road daily displays so many elegant women on horseback" (Hazard, 1854, p. 1). The editor of Peterson's, in an October, 1868, editorial said that "womanly sports, such as . . . riding on horseback . . . are becoming every year more popular" (p. 308).

Neal (1851) wrote in Godey's Lady's Book that "your hand guides the reins gently, yet firmly; your whole frame feels the excitement of the rapid motion. The spirits rise in pure exhilaration, such as the rarest champagne could never give" (p. 27). Similarly, Kane (1915), actress and expert horsewoman, wrote in Ladies Home Journal that "there is something so keenly alive and vital about the sport; a girl feels that she is being carried by a winged Pegasus, and she becomes for a time a part of the nature that is all about her" (p. 11). Also in Ladies Home Journal (September, 1902) the statement was made that:

The muscles of the thighs are well exercised by brisk horseback riding. And the heart and lungs are compelled to do more work in a shorter time.

This exercise is a most fascinating and health giving sport. It is exhilarating in the highest degree, for it stirs up the whole body from its sluggishness, and at the same time is the source of constant pleasure - a great factor in bringing about favorable results in any exercise. (p. 33)

In 1884, Godey's Lady's Book declared horseback riding to be so popular it amounted to "a craze . . . every city has its riding schools, and it is held as a part of every girl's education that she turn out a fair equestrienne, even if she cannot boast of a mount she can call her own" (July, 1884, p. 204).

Riding schools were started in the early part of the nineteenth century and days were set aside just for the ladies. A school, according to Captain J. E. Hance, author of School for Horse and Rider (1932), was not a building, but:

it must be an area of not more than 60 by 20 yards enclosed by something - a wall, hurdles, or even a rope Without a roof, it is impossible to be sure of getting continuous instruction [due to] a severe winter In addition to this inside school, an outdoor school is necessary It is a field about 140 by 120 yards (three acres) [there are] the loose jumping lane . . . thirty jumps . . . a cement wall, a bullfinch, an open ditch . . . some show jumps [and] horses. (pp. 37-40)

After the ladies completed their "programme" they were given a certificate. The programme lasted for no less than a week and consisted of:

actual hours for riding are 9:30 to 11:30 and 2:30 to 4:00. But at 5:30 each evening [there is] a lecture . . . to make clear any difficulties encountered during the day (Hance, 1932, p. 47)

For those who could not, or chose not to attend any riding school, there were numerous articles on how to ride. Peterson's had lessons entitled "Equestrianism for Ladies" running from January until October in 1852. The articles contained specific information on things such as the horse and his equipment, mounting and holding the reins, the seat and balance, controlling the horse, trotting and cantering, stopping and backing, and dismounting. A two-part article containing much of the same information appeared again in Peterson's in August and September of 1861. In 1882 a repeat of the first series appeared in one eight-page article with the addition of illustrations. Frances Lanigan in the June, 1893 issue of Ladies Home Journal, gave implicit instructions concerning use of the riding crop. Bulan (1900), in the magazine Physical Culture, gave instructions as to the proper way to sit in the saddle. Thompson (1904) wrote for Outing an article entitled "How a Woman Learns to Ride" in which she gave directions concerning dress, mounting, holding the reins, sitting, riding, and dismounting.

Etiquette played an important role in riding as in other areas of Victorian life. White's (1900) Twentieth Century Etiquette book included not only the how to's for

women, but for men as well. The following illustrates what was proper for each:

The lady will stand on the near side of the horse, with her skirt gathered in her left hand, her right resting on the pommel, and her face turned toward the horse's head. The gentleman stands at its shoulder, facing his companion, and stoops so that she may place her left foot in his hand, raising it as she springs, but not too suddenly or forcibly, lest she lose her balance and fall. He should then adjust her foot in the stirrup, and smooth down the skirt of her riding habit. She is then prepared to ride [The gentleman] must keep to the left of the lady The lady must determine how fast she wishes to ride [The gentleman] on a toll road, pays the tolls. [A gentleman should] never expect a lady to attend to these duties A gentleman should give the shadiest side of the road to the lady to alight from her horse she must then give her left hand to her escort, and he offers his left hand as a step for her foot. He lowers this hand gently, till she can reach the ground without springing. She should never attempt to spring from her saddle unassisted. (pp. 244-245)

The saddle considered proper for ladies was the side saddle. The side saddle had its beginnings in the fourteenth century as a stuffed platform, not moulded in any way to the shape of the horse, turned back to front so that the planchette, a little footrest, hung down on the side of the horse. The rider could change sides of the horse to minimize the possibility of a sore back to the horse. Anne of Bohemia and Luxembourg, wife of Richard II, is given credit for designing the planchette.

The earliest side saddle, with its attached planchette, possessed a single pommel or horn in front, usually decorated with gilt nails. As the saddle continued to be

used in the fifteenth century, it was covered with velvets, brocades, and furs, and had silk, embroidered bridles. In the sixteenth century, Catherine de' Medici invented a second horn for the side saddle. She spent many hours riding and, because she experienced quite a few falls, sought greater security in the saddle. The second horn allowed women to wedge their right leg between it and the original horn creating a more secure seat.

For nearly two hundred years after the death of Catherine de'Medici the side saddle remained the same, with the exception of decoration. In 1770, a Frenchman, Francois de Garsault, published a book illustrating the saddle with a small pad to cushion the right leg, a large iron stirrup, and the addition of a side handrail. By 1800 the saddle was minus the hand rail and made of buckskin. In 1830 a French riding master, Jules Charles Pillier, added a third horn, known as the leaping head, hunting horn, or third pommel. It was a curved horn placed on the near side of the saddle at about the level of the stirrup bar. At first it was only about six inches long and comparatively upright, but later was both lengthened and broadened to curve around a woman's left thigh. It was not permanently attached, but was held in place by a screw so that each rider could adjust it to fit the curve of her leg. By 1860 this side saddle with three pommels was used everywhere and was known as the "English saddle."

In 1875, all that had been added, began to be pared away. The last to go was the original pommel and it was really only reduced in size. The padding disappeared, leveling off the seat and allowing the rider's right leg to lie against a soft leather flap. This not only allowed the rider to get into closer contact with the horse, but fortunately for the horse, the saddle became lighter. By 1900 the saddle was very simple. (Bloodgood, 1959)

As the nineteenth century evolved into the twentieth century, ladies influenced by the women's rights movement began to experiment with riding astride on the cross saddle. Society, as a whole, was shocked and horrified. Those who were against it spoke out vehemently. Fleitman (1921), in her book entitled Comments on Hacks and Hunters, said "at the risk of appearing biased, I am prepared to state most emphatically that the cross saddle is not best suited to a woman's requirements" (p. 74). Hill (1903), in Athletics and Outdoor Sports for Women said, "I think and hope that the cross saddle for women is more or less a fad, for I cannot see a single advantage it possesses over the side saddle, for looks, good riding, or safety; and I can see innumerable reasons why the side saddle is preferable" (p. 249). Beach (1912) said, "Personally, I deplore this tendency and believe it is a mere passing fad and that . . . women ride best and look best in the side saddle" (p. 37).

Ladies who rode astride were looked on as "hoyendish creatures with a shocking lack of modesty" whose only reason for adopting this style "must be a desire to ape masculine ways and make herself unduly conspicuous" (Maddison, 1923, p. 19). Most of the best horsewomen believed that women would never be experts in the cross saddle and that it was dangerous and impractical to even try.

On the other hand, there were those who spoke out in favor of the cross saddle. Bulan (1900) in Physical Culture said, "There are few reforms so much needed as the introduciton of cross saddle riding for ladies" (p. 327). Hance (1923), when speaking of his riding school, said, "I can honestly say that I would rather teach ladies to ride astride" (p. 28).

Throughout the literature there are various arguments given for and against both types of saddles. Basically, these arguments are as follows:

Arguments for the Side Saddle

1. More aesthetic
2. Riders have superior hands

Arguments for the Cross Saddle

1. More comfortable for horse and rider
2. Dress is more comfortable and safer
3. Riders can go farther with less fatigue
4. Riders can control horse better
5. Easier to get away if horse falls

6. Saddle is lighter in weight (14 lbs.)
7. Easier to mount and dismount alone
8. Easier to jump horse
9. Safer if horse rears
10. Safer if horse falls

Arguments Against the Side Saddle

1. More apt to rub a horse's back
2. Apt to make rider one sided and enlarge one hip
3. Rider is more apt to be dragged in case of accident
4. Rider cannot mount and dismount alone
5. Cannot get horse to jump as high
6. Pommels are dangerous in case of falling
7. Rider must sit too far back on horse
8. Extra pressure is applied to left side of horse
9. Saddle will turn if girths become slack
10. Saddles are hard to find in out of the way places

Arguments Against the Cross Saddle

1. Riding astride is against laws of hygiene
2. Riding clothes are not in accordance with propriety
3. Well bred women should not cause comment
4. Women are physically not built correctly; legs are too short, thighs too thick

Even though much of the literature supported the use of the side saddle, when the arguments were weighed, those in favor of the cross saddle were stronger. The best

arguments for the side saddle pertained only to propriety and the image that was deemed proper by the ideal of the time.

As far as the question of health is concerned, there were more professional medical opinions against riding side saddle than against riding astride. Many doctors supported the belief that continuous riding on the same side often caused irregular development of the thigh muscles (Walker, 1902) and curvature of the spine (Bulan, 1900), especially if girls started riding at very early ages. It was the opinion of one doctor that:

a side saddle is dangerous, unsanitary, uncomfortable, and fatiguing to horse and rider, very heavy and ugly, whereas a cross saddle is safer, forms a natural seat to a woman, is lighter and more comfortable, and less fatiguing to horse and rider, safer in case of accidents, and more conducive to good health than the side saddle. (Bulan, 1900, p. 328)

The issues of the side saddle versus the cross saddle continued into the 1920's. Those who chose to ride astride did so. Others continued the long time practice of riding side saddle. Purdy (1905) summed the situation up nicely in The Outing by saying:

The advent of the woman who rides astride was the occasion for a good deal of unnecessary argument pro and con. There is no question as to whether a woman shall ride astride of a horse or not; she does. Those who prefer the side saddle will continue to sit on the side of the horse; while those who like to ride as men do will sit their horses that way. (p. 463)

Bicycling: 1885 to 1920

Bicycling was the first sport that had mass appeal in America, and it was a milestone in the history of both sports and fashions for women. Fascination for the freedom machine was stronger than modesty.

The bicycle came to America several different times. In 1816 the first bicycle was invented in Paris by a Baron von Drais. It was made of wood and was known as a *célèfire* (Howland, 1881), or a *celeripede* (in English), meaning "fast feet". The vehicle consisted of two wheels of the same size connected by a long wooden bar. To ride it one would straddle the bar and propel the machine by walking or running along the ground. It was introduced in America in 1819 as the "dandy horse", the "hobby horse", and the "velocipede" (Speed, 1895), but never really gained in popularity or general use. When going downhill there was no way to stop for there were no brakes (Porter, 1890).

In 1865 the bicycle was introduced again, having been modified in Connecticut by a Parisian, Pierre Lallement (Pratt, 1891). This version was made of wood, had two wheels, with pedals on the front wheel. It, too, was known as the velocipede, but because it gave the rider so much discomfort, it became known as the "bone breaker" or "bone crusher" (Speed, p. 231). It was heavy, weighing almost one hundred and fifty pounds, and was clumsy as well as uncomfortable. Improvements were made to lighten the bicycle

and enable it to gain more speed and also allow for more comfort. One of these improvements was the steel wheel covered with rubber.

The first successful bicycle came in 1879. It was known as the "high bicycle" (Aronson, 1952, p. 294), the "modern bicycle" or the "American Star" (Howland, 1881, p. 284). Its wheels had rubber tires and the bicycle attained good speed; however, mounting it was difficult because the seat was on the front wheel which was four or five feet in diameter. On the "American Star" the seat was on the back wheel which was also four or five feet in diameter. This bicycle was very popular with young and athletic males.

In 1885 the "Safety Bicycle" (Garrigues, 1896, Howland, 1881, Speed, 1895; and Townsend, 1895) was made which allowed young and old of both sexes to cycle. The wheels were both about two feet in diameter and a seat rested on an iron frame between the wheels. The handlebars were made of either steel or wood (Brown, 1897) and were available with either the spade handle, which was stirrup shaped, or the straight bar handle (Denison, 1891). The bicycle was driven by a sprocket and chain attached to the rear wheel and moved with pedals below the seat (Garrigues, 1896). This cycle weighed from 20 pounds (Speed, 1895) to 34 pounds (Clay, 1891) and cost from \$100 to \$150.

The safety bicycle became known as the lady's bicycle. The first one built just for ladies was called the "Dart". Others were called the "Psycho Safety" and "Columbia Lady's Safety" (Clay, 1891, p. 305). Black was considered the most elegant color for a lady's choice of frame, followed by blue, maroon, and ruby. Gold or silver ornamentation was popular and name plates with the owner's name engraved on it were common. Women seized upon these bicycles as a means of defying tradition. The bicycle was a passport to freedom. For the first time in American society a young women could go out unchaperoned.

Society was not ready to accept women on bicycles in 1885. Those who rode were ridiculed and even condemned as immodest, undignified, unladylike, ungraceful, and conspicuous. It was claimed that by showing their ankles women were indecent and shocking and that the familiarity and companionship with men led to immorality (Garrigues, 1896). When the clergy began to denounce the practice of cycling as immodest and therefore immoral, John Speed (1895) refuted that idea in Lippincott's Magazine by saying:

An immodest woman on a bicycle would be immodest still, the wheel not having any power to save her, but an immodest woman would be immodest walking in the street or sitting in church, or wherever she might be. The bicycle has nothing whatever to do with modesty or immodesty, with morality or immorality . . . and the bicycle is growing in popularity every day (p. 230)

Society as a whole laughed and sneered at women riders, sided with the clergy, and denounced the practice of cycling as "unwomanly" (Merrington, 1895, p. 703).

Much of the rejection of the idea of women on bicycles was due to the fact that for centuries legs had been taboo. Ladies who wore daring necklines would never endanger their reputations by showing their ankles. In polite society women were unipeds. On a bicycle it was very evident that women had two feet and that those two feet were the extremities of two separate legs!

The bicycle was the subject of medical as well as religious dispute. There were those who asserted that riding was very injurious to women on account of their "structural peculiarities" (Speed, 1895, p. 236), or their lack of stamina which would cause the problem of fatigue.

There were several members of the medical profession (Fenton, 1896; Neesen, 1899; Roosevelt, 1895) who discovered an array of new ailments which the cyclist was heir to. The bicycle stoop and cyclist's sore throat were two of the more common. But they all agreed that cycling for the normal woman was a healthful form of exercise because a cyclist did not have to be muscular or robust. In fact, the opinion was soon formed that regular exercise on a bicycle would improve action of the heart, cure varicose veins, prevent tuberculosis, anemia, indigestion, and sleeplessness.

Arguments against woman's use of the bicycle were that riding required too much exertion, was likely to cause internal injury, and that riding was unfeminine. Bird (1890) believed the arguments to be fallacious, and that

The old idea that a woman should not engage in out of door sports has long been abandoned, and their beneficent effect upon her is daily seen in our young women and growing girls, whose step, erect carriage, and glowing color are in themselves unmistakable evidences of health. (p. 394)

Neesen (1899) suggested that anyone who doubted the benefits of the bicycle should compare a "modern, up-to-date girl" (p. 58) with one who led an ordinary life. The clear eyes, fresh complexion, and poise found in the modern girl was attributed to the bicycle.

Roosevelt (1895) summed up the beliefs of many when he said, "cycling is harmful to some women all the time; to all women some of the time; but not to all women all of the time" (p. 710). It was believed that if women did not overexert themselves by riding too long or too fast, cycling was a most beneficial exercise.

There were several social and economic issues that arose in the 1890's due to the great popularity of the bicycle. As more and more people, men and women, joined in the bicycle "craze", the need arose for better roads and provisions for parking bicycles became necessary in the cities.

Theater managers complained that their business suffered due to the popularity of the bicycle. Young ladies were permitted to take rides with young men without a chaperone but were not allowed to attend the theater without one. Consequently, they chose to take the rides (Brown, 1897, p 315). Churches complained that they were losing their young people due to the bicycle. In the smaller communities there was little else to do on Sunday than to attend church services, and the churches were really the social center of these communities. But with the bicycle available it was not in the nature of the young people to resist "a day spent in the open air, in rolling swiftly over smooth roadways, or through shady lanes, and past green and flowering meadows" (Bishop, 1896, p. 682). The churches appealed to the young people's sense of "Christian duty" (p. 682) and even offered space for parking the bicycles, to no avail.

The sellers of books complained that business was poor because "the bicycle craze prevented people from reading as much during the warm months as previously" (Brown, p. 315). The dealers of luxuries also felt the effects, because whereas watches, locketts, earrings, or pins had been common gifts for Christmas, birthdays, or special occasions, they were replaced with bicycles. The piano business during the year 1896 was reported (Bishop, 1896, p. 686) to have fallen 50 percent.

Dry goods merchants believed that the passion of young women for the bicycle reduced their sales of dress fabric and expensive costumes from 25 to 50 percent. The ladies preferred their riding to sitting at home in "elegant apparel" (Bishop, 1896, p. 687).

Masters of horsemanship who lost their female students turned instead to teaching bicycle riding. Montaigne reported in Godey's Lady's Book in April, 1896, that "hackmen were so incensed against the cyclers, who cut into their profits, that they cunningly inserted tacks in places the [cyclists] were wont to frequent; the result was any number of punctured tires and much profanity" (p. 444).

Bicycling for ladies became so popular that clubs were formed. Some were as small in number as six with others having as many members as 60. Members of these clubs often kept their bicycles in one location and would then meet at certain times to take short trips together. A common trip was one in which the ladies would take a small cooking stove, a lot of goodies, and some books and ride into the country, set up camp, make tea, read and gossip for an hour or so, then pedal home. Large clubs often elected officers and had a designated club color (Clay, 1891, p. 306).

A magic carpet could have possessed no greater virtues for women than the bicycle. On a bicycle a lady rider was on absolute equality with any man, no assistance was needed in mounting or dismounting, she could ride as fast as any

man, yet lose none of her femininity. Bisland (1896) said of the fair rider:

For the first time in the memory of her sex she is an absolutely free agent, and yet a woman still. She has lost nothing in grace, in womanliness, in her claims on courtesy, admiration, chivalry, and her thousand and one inalienable rights. This fact alone is a sufficiently strong recommendation of the bicycle to every girl who loves pleasure. (p. 386)

Swimming: 1850 to 1920

During the early years of the nineteenth century, the only leisure-time contact women had with water was in bathing in special bath houses located at sources of natural springs. "Bathing" was the practice of immersing all or a part of the body into water. Men and women were segregated because each bathed in the nude. The bathing houses offered showers and warm baths for therapeutic or medicinal purposes as well as larger areas known as "plunge baths" (Kidwell, 1968, p. 7). Plunge baths were for recreational purposes and were somewhat comparable to the men's "swimming baths" (p. 7), but were smaller.

When sea bathing became popular toward mid-century few women ventured into the open water due to fear. Only female companions were permitted due to the prevailing attitudes regarding the proper behavior of a lady and because they bathed nude. A few ignored the dictates of society and fully clothed ventured onto the bathing beaches with men. By mid-century mixed bathing was acceptable.

There were no dressing rooms available on the beaches so special facilities in the form of "bathing machines" were provided for the female bathers. These bathing machines were "small wooden buildings on wheels which were pulled into the water by horses or other swimmers" (Spears, 1983, p. 118). Bathers changed into their bathing attire while the machines were being pulled into the water. Once in the water the horses were unhitched and the lady could step down into the sea protected from public view by an awning called a "modesty tunnel" (Adler, 1980, p. 2). By 1870 these bathing machines were replaced by stationary, individual sentry-box structures and the large communal bath houses. Half of the sentry boxes were for the women and half were for the men. The communal houses were either divided in half or were used alternately. The hours and practices varied but it was customary on most beaches to display colored flags to signal times for the women and times for the men to use the houses.

Summer resorts were established and excursions to resorts became social events for the elite. Bathing was just one of the many events planned that had an appointed time and proper dress. There were dinners, concerts, balls, and carriage rides, all planned into each visitor's schedule. Bathing was transformed from a medicinal treatment to a pleasurable pursuit.

Swimming as the self-propulsion of the body through water was a sport reserved for the men only. The seaside resorts set aside time for men to practice swimming, which was done in the nude, but women had no similar opportunity. The women were so covered in their bathing clothes that it would have been impossible to swim had they tried.

By the late 1860's, as part of the growing health movement, women were being encouraged to take up swimming as an exercise. A column that appeared in Frank Leslie's Illustrated Newspaper in 1866, entitled "Physical Exercise for Females", asserted that "bathing, as it is practiced on our coast resorts, is, no doubt, a delightful recreation; but if to it swimming could be added, the delight would be increased, and the possible use and advantage much extended" (p. 355).

While women were being encouraged to learn to swim for healthful exercise, swimming was increasing in popularity as a recreational sport for men. It was not until the late 1880's that swimming became socially acceptable for women.

The first swimming pools were built in YMCA's and YWCA's, then in athletic clubs and at country clubs. Lessons were offered to women by the YWCA organizations, and by 1916 there were 32,000 women across the nation in swimming classes (Spears, 1983). Gradually women's colleges began to build pools and offer classes as well.

By the turn of the century writers no longer tried to convince their readers that women should learn to swim. Instead, they concentrated on what a woman should know when she did swim. Dalton (1904) wrote an article for Outing giving detailed instructions on becoming accustomed to the water, how to float, dive, how to breathe, and also rules of swimming just for women. Dr. Walker, in the July, 1904 issue of Ladies Home Journal, wrote of specific precautions women should take when swimming and the dangers of not taking these precautions. She warned that it was possible for swimmers to be "unbalanced mentally for periods of from one to five years through indulgence in sea bathing under illjudged conditions" (p. 29). Annette Kellerman, an Australian swimming and diving champion who came to America in 1907, gave a list of do's and dont's for swimming in Ladies Home Journal (July, 1915), but she stressed confidence in the water. She believed that women were naturally better fitted for swimming than men but were instinctively timid rather than confident when in the water.

From 1915 to 1920 there was an increase in the appreciation of recreation, resulting in an increase of pools and available beaches. Swimming was established as a sport for both men and women. It was not until the 1920's, however, that social attitudes permitted women the same full use of the water as was allowed to men.

Tennis: 1874 to 1920

In 1873 Major Walter C. Wingfield of the British Army invented a game called "Sphairistike" (Tunis, 1940, p. 299), a Greek word meaning ball play. The game was based on one he had seen in France. Major Wingfield introduced this new game to his guests at a house party and it became an instant success. Sphairistike was played by two contestants who batted a ball over a net which was seven feet high on each end but sagged to only five in the middle. The grass court was shaped like an hourglass, sixty feet long, thirty feet wide at the outer base lines, and twenty one feet wide at the net. There was a box in the center where the server stood.

The word "tenez" (Paret, 1904, p. 5) or "tennez" (Barnes, Fox, Scott, & Loeffler, 1966, p. 384), meaning "play" in French, was shouted by the server before the ball was put into play. It is supposed, but cannot be authentically proven, that this was the origin of our English word "tennis".

There are differing accounts about the actual origin of tennis. Some sources claim that it had been played for years prior to 1873 (Barnes, et. al.), and others say that it developed from the French game played during the reign of Louis XII (Tunis) in the French district of Tennois (Weaver, 1939). Major Wingfield, however, has been given credit for the invention of the game, as he received a

patent for it in 1874 (Paret). The name "lawn tennis" became official in 1875.

There are also differing stories about how tennis came to America. One, told by Paret (1904) and Anderson (1926), is that a man from Boston traveling abroad saw the game and brought a set of Major Wingfield's rules and implements for the game home. He is said to have built a court at his country home in Nahant, a seaside resort near Boston. Another story, told by Tunis (1940), Gerber, et. al (1974), Van Dalen and Bennett (1971), and supported by the United States Lawn Tennis Association (1931), is that in 1874, one of Major Wingfield's friends saw his game and, liking it very much, bought the rules and equipment and took them to Bermuda where he was an army officer. There an American girl, Mary Outerbridge, saw the game, played it, and liked it so much she brought a set to the United States with her that same year. It is said that she laid out the first court at the Staten Island Cricket and Baseball Club on Staten Island where her brother, Emilius Outerbridge, was director. Mary introduced her friends to the game and the women played tennis while the men played cricket and baseball. Popularity of the game soon spread and lawn tennis became a sport for the rich, both men and women, who had country homes with large lawns, and who had the leisure in which to pursue this pastime.

During the early years, lawn tennis was played under widely varying conditions with the rules being changed every few months. The nets hung at different heights, courts varied in size and shape, having been changed to rectangular, and the balls differed in fabrication and size. It was not until tournaments were held that the full importance of the discrepancies became apparent.

In May, 1881, Emilius Outerbridge called a meeting of all the clubs interested in lawn tennis, and with 33 clubs represented, the United States Lawn Tennis Association was formed. The English rules were adopted and the "Ayres" championship ball (Paret, 1904, p. 11), made in England, was also adopted as the official ball. The popularity of the game increased and in 1890 there were 76 clubs in the Association (Van Dalen & Bennett, 1971). By 1895 there were 105 member clubs (Betts, 1974).

According to Weaver (1939), most people believed from the beginning that lawn tennis would always appeal more to women than to men. Although this has not proven to be true, there was an abundance of opportunity for women to play. Most of the clubs admitted ladies to full or limited membership, and some clubs were formed exclusively for women. New York had numerous clubs with tennis facilities just for the ladies. The Ladies Club for Outdoor Sports, affiliated with the Staten Island Cricket and Baseball Club, was the most prominent of the separate ladies' clubs. The

club started in 1877 with about 30 women and within ten years had over 200 members. Arrangements were made for the use of the grounds so that:

there should be no clashing of interest [with the men]. The ladies were privileged to play on all the courts during the morning; . . . the two or three nets nearest their [club] house [were] at all times their exclusive property; . . . during the afternoons they were at liberty to play at any other of the nets that were not required by the men; and every Friday the whole grounds were theirs exclusively, and the men could only occupy such nets as they did not want. (Clay, 1887, p. 108)

Tournaments were organized for women frequently after 1881, and the first national championship for women was held in 1887. In the early years the men's clubs assisted in the organizing and conducting of the tournaments, but gradually the women took over and ran them themselves. Outstanding players during this time were Bertha Townsend, Ellen Hansell, Ellen Roosevelt, and Mabel Cahill.

Ellen Hansell won the first national championship and received a silver trophy in the form of a "tennis girl bearing aloft a silver platter" (Gerber, et. al., 1974, p. 128). She was not allowed to keep it permanently because it was to be the property of "the girl whose name was on it three successive times" (Allderdice, 1931, p. 41). Such an event did not take place until 1951, 1952, and 1953.

Elizabeth Moore (1931) was the American Ladies Champion of 1896, 1901, 1903, and 1905. She won her last tournament in 1909, 17 years after she first played at the

national games. Doing so, she said, "indicates that a girl or woman can play so called championship tennis . . . for many years before being permanently relegated to the porch" (p. 68).

May Sutton Bundy was the first American to win at Wimbledon, but not without some social difficulties. One of the English contestants objected to the flash of ankle her dress revealed and the bare forearms her short-sleeved blouse did not cover. Miss Sutton was not allowed on Center Court until she rolled down her sleeves and lowered her hemline. Her first victory was in 1905 and she won again in 1907. In 1931, when reminiscing about those days, she said, "I really believe I had my best time in 1906, the year I lost, which proves that winning at tennis is not always essential to having a good time" (Bundy, 1931, p. 112).

In the early 1880's tennis for women did not involve overhand serves or volleys at the net. At this time their clothing presented little trouble because they were not expected to run or to hit the ball hard. They were content to gently pat the ball back and forth over the net. But as women became more involved in the game and began to participate competitively their actions became a little more swift. Ladies were often seen holding their long skirts in their left hand as they rushed after a ball.

Paret (1914) told of a situation in which some of the better players, one of whom was Elizabeth Moore, were discussing the differences in standards of play for men and women. The ladies decided to arrange a test game in which a Mr. Magowan would play against Juliette Atkinson, the smallest of the ladies, who later became the nation's champion. Mr. Magowan had to wear a skirt, and a dinner for everyone was wagered on the result of the game. It seems that it took some time to find a skirt to fit Mr. Magowan because of his height. Eventually one was found, and what started out as a joke became an earnest game. Before the first set was finished it was apparent that Mr. Magowan was not going to win. Toward the end of the second set, the rule which forbade him to lift his skirt above his knees was broken many times and he finally put his foot completely through the skirt. The women claimed the game and "rubbed in their victory at the celebrating dinner with great glee" (p. 44).

As in the case of other sports, there were those who were convinced that women would never make good players of tennis because of "deficient strength and lack of physical training" (Walker, 1902, p. 31). However, there was never the strong opposition to women's participation as there was in other sports. Probably this was so because the sport had been introduced into this country by a woman. It was considered by most people (Paret, 1904; Walker, 1902;

Anderson, 1926) to be a very healthy exercise for both mind and body. Physically tennis was considered good because it helped develop the muscles of the arms and legs, developed the lungs and heart, and trained the eye to see accurately under the stress of excitement. It was also considered an excellent means of teaching ladies to lose or win gracefully, develop kindliness and consideration of others develop grace of movement, acquire a clear complexion, and maintain a perfect mental attitude. For women tennis was not a game of brute strength, but rather one of perfect style or form. No sport for women had offered exercise coupled with competition until tennis.

Golf: 1888 to 1920

In 1887, John Reid, "the father of American golf" (Grimsley, 1966, p. 32), requested that his good friend and fellow Scotsman, Robert Lockheart, bring back from his business trip to Britain a set of golf clubs and some balls. Lockheart went to St. Andrews, one of the most famous golf clubs in Scotland, where he ordered six clubs and two dozen balls to be delivered to him in New York. They arrived in the dead of winter but he was so excited about receiving them that he tried them out before delivering them to Reid.

On February 22, 1888, Reid got five of his friends together and took them to a Yonkers cow pasture where he laid out three short holes. This was the first golf course ever constructed in the United States. There were not enough

clubs to go around so Reid and a friend, John P. Upham, played a match while the other four looked on. When Reid and his friend discovered that the three-hole layout was inadequate, they moved to a larger pasture where a six-hole course was laid out.

On November 14, 1888, Reid gave a dinner party attended by his golfing buddies. During the evening the group organized themselves into a club, calling themselves the St. Andrews Club of Yonkers, naming it for the famous club in Scotland. They established dues at \$5 a year (Grimsley, 1966; Tunis, 1940). Thus the St. Andrews Club of Yonkers became the cornerstone for golf in the United States.

Through the efforts of Thomas Havemeyer, the "Sugar King" (Spears & Swanson, 1983, p. 149), a nine-hole course was built in Middlesboro, Kentucky, in 1889, known as the Middlesboro Club, the second golf club to be established in this country. Popularity of the game spread and by 1894 there were several clubs in New Jersey, Rhode Island, Connecticut, and Illinois, as well as in New York.

The first professionally designed golf course in the United States, known as Shinnecock Hills, was opened in 1891 on Long Island. The first tournament was held in 1894 at the Newport Golf Club in Rhode Island.

On December 22, 1894, a general meeting of golf club members was held. With five clubs represented, the Amateur Golf Association of the United States, later named the United States Golf Association, was founded.

Women became involved in golf slowly. The first record of women's participation in golf was in a mixed foursome on March 30, 1889 at the St. Andrews Club of Yonkers. John Reid and Miss Carrie Low were partners and Reid's friend John Upham teamed with Mrs. Reid (Grimsley, 1966, p. 34). The first clubs to encourage women players were the Shinnecock Hills Golf Club and the Chicago Golf Club. According to Tunis (1940) in 1895 there were probably not more than 100 women golfers in the entire country.

The first women's amateur championship was held on November 9, 1895, at Meadowbrook Club in Hempstead, New York. On this misty, drizzling morning 13 women met to "compete for the title" (Fitz Patrick, 1898, p. 295). The winner was Mrs. Charles S. Brown.

Before the next year's tournament the ladies met with the United States Golf Association to set rules for the tournament. The second year there were 29 players who met at the Morris County Golf Club in Morristown, New Jersey. Mrs. Brown did not compete and the winner was Beatrix Hoyt of Shinnecock Hills, who also won in 1897 and 1898.

In winning the first year, Mrs. Brown received as a permanent possession a silver pitcher. A permanent trophy was established in 1896, with Beatrix Hoyt's name being the first to be engraved on it.

Each year saw an increase in the number of entrants. In 1898 there were 61 and by 1916 there were more than 100 (Grimsley, 1966, pp. 205-206).

In 1898 the Woman's Golf Association of Philadelphia was founded. For three years it was the only organization exclusively for women. In 1900 the Women's Metropolitan Golf Association was formed by 22 of the more important clubs around New York.

As with the other sports previously discussed, golf was considered a healthful pastime for women. In stressing the importance of exercising for women, Speed (1894) advocated that:

there was never a more fascinating nor a more healthful game invented than golf . . . if very young children and very old men can compete in golf, finding both pleasure and healthful exercise in it, why should it not be played also by women? . . . Tennis, being both fast and furious, is a game exclusively for young people who are both strong and agile. To be able to walk and to have free use of the arms is all that golf primarily requires. (p. 9)

He continued to explain the advantages of golf and stressed that golf could be taken up at any age, and that:

there is no reason why the middle-aged woman should fasten herself in a rocking chair and consent to be regarded by youngsters around her as antiquated at forty-five. Instead . . . she can, with her golfing

clubs, follow her ball from link to link, renewing her beauty and her youth by exercising in the open air.
(p. 9)

Similarly, Walker (1902) believed golf to be "better than medicine, and will make over the poor, tired body and the fagged out mind" (p. 29).

Not only was golf considered to be healthful for women, but it was also attributed to building good character. There were definite rules to be followed and no cheating was allowed. According to Griscom (1903), not only did golf help make ladies more honorable, it also helped them learn to be cheerful losers and generous winners. Walker (1902) believed that the game developed patience, courage, and self mastery and that it was a "marvelous test of nerve and temper" (p. 29).

Golf offered an advantage to women in that it did not necessarily require great strength. It was a game in which one could participate as both a leisure and competitive sport.

The women who participated in leisure sports during the last half of the nineteenth century and the early years of the twentieth century did so with great difficulty. Society scorned the advent of each new sport for women with the exception of horseback riding. The problem with riding arose when women began to ride cross saddle. Most people believed that sports were for men only, and during the days

of the Victorian ideal, that any woman who participated in such masculine activities would "unsex" herself.

As society awakened to the need for exercise as a contributor to good health, leisure sports activities became more acceptable for women. Eventually doctors stressed the need for outdoor activities and exercise for women. Thus riding, bicycling, swimming, tennis, and golf gained acceptance by society for women participants.

CHAPTER IV

THE DEVELOPMENT OF FEMININE SPORTS FASHIONS

Historical Background

The development and acceptance of sports for women has been mirrored in the clothing devised for these leisure activities. Sports have precipitated major changes such as the abandonment of corsets, the shortening of skirts, the acceptance of bifurcated garments, and the introduction of bodywear. They have freed fashion from heavy fabrics, unnecessary ornamentation, and cumbersome skirt supporters. Sports have demonstrated that fashion and function need no longer be adversaries.

Until the development of sports for women there was no need for function. A dress indicated one's position in life. The more fabric, lace, ribbon, rosettes, tassles, and bows a woman wore, the higher was her rank or greater her wealth. Dresses required many yards of heavy fabrics and were layered over multiples of petticoats.

Nineteenth-century sports for the wealthy women were confined mostly to lawn tennis, croquet, golf, and horseback riding. While the clothing for these sports was decidedly nonfunctional, it slowly evolved into styles of greater utility. Prior to the advent of women in sports, functional utility in clothing implied that it was for physical labor,

and no prestige value could be attributed to it. But participating in sports meant one had sufficient leisure to participate in play activities and modification in dress for these activities became entirely acceptable as long as everyone knew that the physical exercise was "all in fun" (Horn, 1981, p. 113).

As women became more active in sports, corsets were gradually abandoned. Women became aware that "swift gestures and tightly laced corsets were incompatible" (Adler, 1980, p. 1).

Paret (1901) wrote in his The Woman's Book of Sports that young women considered sports as much a part of their educational accomplishments as French and mathematics. Bloomer costumes were the universal dress for indoor school sports such as gymnastics, exercise, and physical education classes. They became socially acceptable for outdoor wear through the sport of cycling.

The most drastic changes that occurred in women's dress originated on the tennis court and the bathing beaches. Annette Kellerman, a champion swimmer, and Suzanne Lenglen, a tennis star, revolutionized sport clothes by foregoing etiquette and wearing garments that were both comfortable and practical.

Sports fashions as we know them today have been in the making for about a century. The styles introduced for one sport often required several decades and the

contributions of several sports to become acceptable. Bloomers paved the way for pants. Gymnastics and tennis were partially responsible for the demise of the corset. Swimming paved the way for body-molding and skin-revealing designs.

Sports have had a lasting effect on fashion. The clothes worn just for sports yesterday are the street clothes of today.

Riding Habits: 1850 to 1920

The lady rider of the nineteenth century used a special side saddle designed with a leaping horn and pommels designed to hold her bent knee and give her body proper balance. Her right leg went over one pommel and under another in a bent position while her left leg was held against the saddle with her foot in a stirrup. In this position, which was considered normal and comfortable, the proper lady rode and even jumped. The costume, or riding habit, worn for riding in this position was designed to completely cover the lady's legs and feet.

There were two very different ideas about the riding habits of the nineteenth century; there were those who thought the habit lovely, and those who disagreed. Bloodgood (1959) began her history of the side saddle with the statement:

Few costumes in history have so delightedly enhanced the charms of women as that designed for the side saddle; only to recall the trim waists, tight fitting

bodices, top hats, and veils that graced the bridal paths and hunting fields of the past is to regret their passing and to grieve that, like the curricule and cabriolet, they seem doomed to vanish into silent realms of prints and books. (p. 1)

On the other hand, Waldron (1898), in writing on sport clothes, had an opposing view:

The riding habit of the earlier decades of the nineteenth century was a thing which could certainly have been of no beauty to the onlooker and must have been anything but a joy to the wearer. Its heavy hat, its flowing veil and the length of its ample skirts . . . threatening to become entangled in the horses feet [It was an] absurdly inconvenient custom . . . acknowledged as suitable for women (p. 96)

The riding habits of the 1850's, as seen and described in fashion magazines of the day, Godey's Lady's Book and Peterson's, were much like those described by Mrs. Bloodgood and Mrs. Waldron. They were of two pieces, with the jacket, referred to as a basque or corsage, designed to fit snugly throughout the bodice and waist and flare over the hips. Often times they were designed to be open in the front with revers, or lapels, allowing a white blouse to show, and at other times they were buttoned all the way up with only a small white collar showing under the chin. The sleeves were straight, usually with cuffs, and often had cambric under sleeves. (Figure 9)

The skirts were long, described as "a yard and a half to a yard and five eights in length" (Peterson's, May, 1857 p. 398). They were pleated or gathered so that the greatest amount of fullness was on the left side. The hems were

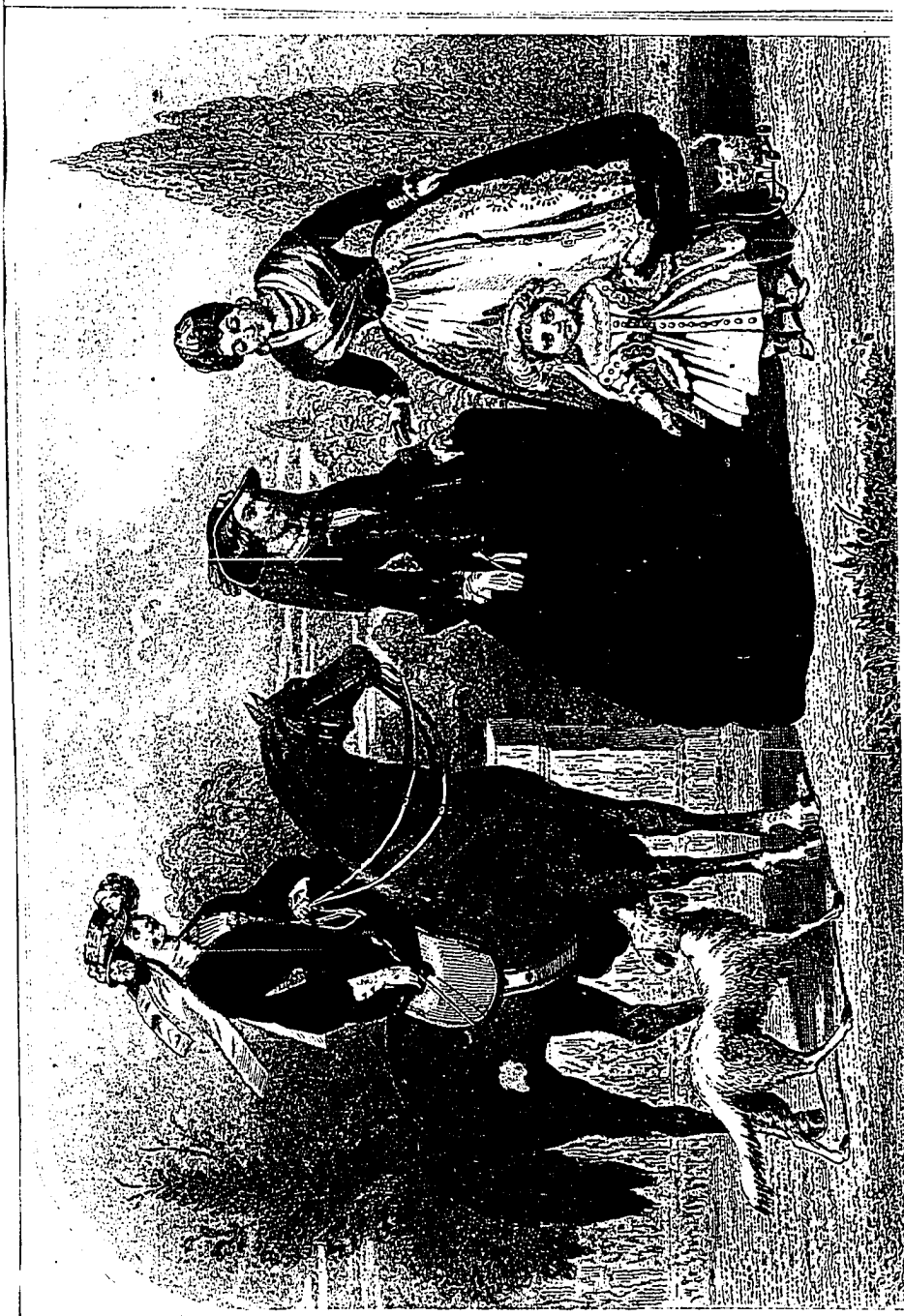


Figure 9. 1856

weighted to insure that the skirts stayed in place over the rider's feet. They were "made plain, with a heavy hem to hold the drapery in place; many add a cord, and even weights to the hem . . ." (Godey's, April 1857, p. 383).

A variety of fabrics were used for the riding habits. Godey's and Peterson's both described habits made of fabrics such as habit cloth, cashmere, merino, pelisse (a light broadcloth), lady's cloth, thicket cloth, and French cloth. Wilson (1979) in A History of Textiles defined two of the more uncommonly known ones. Ladycloth (without the 's) was a fine quality flannel (p. 281), and thicket (spelled as thickset) was the eighteenth-century name for corduroy, a fabric at that time consisting of linen warp and cotton weft yarns (p. 69). It is possible the term "French cloth" referred to fabric imported from France and "habit cloth" referred to any one of the above that was used so often as to be considered made especially for habits. The term most frequently found in the literature was "lady's cloth".

The color most often described as the season's most fashionable color was green. It was referred to as "forest green" in Peterson's October, 1859 issue (p. 296), and as "myrtle green" in the August, 1879 issue (p. 152). At other times it was simply referred to as dark green, as it was in Godey's. Black and dark blue were the second most common colors, with brown and mauve being mentioned occasionally.

Riding habits were extremely simple and well tailored. The only ornamentation used was velvet braid or ribbon, satin cording, gold buttons, or pendant buttons of linen passementerie (braid). Two collars that were described in Godey's Lady's Book were the Vandyke, in February, 1853 (p. 188), and the Cavalier, in June, 1858 (p. 573). The Vandyke was a broad, flat collar, rounded on the edges, and tied together in the front with a velvet ribbon. The Cavalier was also a large, flat collar, but rather than being rounded, it was foliated with deep V shaped edges.

Boots were an important part of the proper lady's ensemble. A typical pair was

made of patent leather, of a rich lustrous black hue, the upper portion of fancy colored morocco, maroon, green, or bronze, and bordered with silk galloon, finished with neat tassels. Excepting in their elegant and ornamental appearance, they are essentially similar to the dress boots of the sterner sex This fashion is in accordance with sound sense and comfort. (Godey's, June, 1854, p. 551)

There were two styles of hats worn as a part of the riding ensemble in the 1850's. The top hat was the most common. Usually black, with tall crowns and narrow brims, the top hat had a gauze veil attached to it in a color to match the habit. The beaver hat was often worn also. It had a flatter crown than the top hat, usually had a rolled brim, and was always adorned with plumes.

Gauntlet style gloves were also worn as a finishing touch to the ensemble. They were most often buff or straw colored and made of soft leather.

During the 1860's there were a few changes in riding habits. The major change in the basque was the addition of a jockey in the back. The jockey was an extension, made of deep pleats, that flared over the hips. (Figure 10) Skirts were changed in length and amount of fullness in the wasitline area. In Godey's Lady's Book April, 1862 issue, an example was described as being made "longer in the back than the front; an important modification, as it allows the skirt sufficient length in the saddle and relieves the wearer in walking" (p. 311). An example in Peterson's (January, 1863) was described as being "gored, so that whilst it is exceedingly full at the lower part, there are comparatively few plaits at the waist. This is a vast improvement" (p. 90). There were no set rules for skirt length, however. According to the July, 1863 issue of Godey's Lady's Book, "the only rule . . . is, that the skirt must be just long and wide enough to hang gracefully" (p. 107).

Underskirts were decreased in number. One was the recommended number when worn along with pantaloons, called riding trousers or breeches. The pantaloons, or breeches, were made of Bedford cord or whipcord the same color as the habit, so as not to be noticeable when mounting or dismounting. Fleitman (1921) said a well fitting pair of



EQUESTRIAN COSTUME FOR 1862.

Figure 10. 1862

trousers should be almost like those worn by a man, the only difference being:

that breeches worn on a side saddle should fit the thigh more snugly so as not to make the skirt bulge on the sides. Whatever fullness there is, should only begin about ten inches above the knee; at the knee itself they should fit like a glove to prevent rubbing. They should be made in such a manner that when drawn on the openings are in the proper place the buttons may be placed on the shin bone, a trifle to the outside on the left leg, and to the inside on the right leg, so as to prevent any rubbing against the saddle.

Four buttons are supposed to be the correct number to appear above the boot top, but as a woman's boots should be slightly shorter than those used by a man, there should be extensions on her breeches, which button or lace half way down the leg under the boot. These not only keep the leg warm in winter, but also prevent the breeches from slipping out over the top of the boot in an untidy fashion. (pp. 242-243)

The colors most often worn continued, as in the previous decade, to be green, black and dark blue. However, gray and brown were new shades that became very popular.

There was a major change in hats worn for riding during the 1860's. Instead of the top hat or beaver hat, the most common was the straw hat known as the Caladonian. It often had the crown one color and the brim another, and always had feathers or flowers as trim. An innovative style was the turban. It was made with a moleskin crown and a felt brim. This style, too was ornamented with plumes or "pompoms of feathers" (Peterson's, November, 1861, p. 401). Both of these styles can be seen along with the traditional hat in Figure 11.



Figure 11. 1865

The gloves of the 1860's were the gauntlet, as before. They, like the hats, however, were often two-toned. The hand part was often white with the gauntlet being black or a color to match the habit.

There were almost no changes made to the styles of habits or hats during the 1870's. Navy blue was by far the most common color with black second. Linen was used for the habits in addition to the previously mentioned fabrics. Revers, often trimmed with velvet, were popular, which prompted ladies to add a bit of embroidery or lace to the fronts of their blouses, or chemisettes.

During the 1880's about the only change was to the skirt. It became slimmer and took on a different shape. According to Peterson's (February, 1885):

The skirt is made without plaits at the waist, and is gored to fit the figure. It should be tied on over the saddle to insure a good fit. The right side is cut longer than the left, which is so short that it does not come much below the foot, and should fall without a fold. (p. 190) (Figure 12)

To create the smooth look that was so desired, the skirt patterns were designed so that there was a curved seam along the right gore which formed "a sort of pocket for the knee" (Peterson's, June, 1882, 487).

The riding habit of the 1890's changed very little. The hour glass figure was fashionable in everyday wear and became fashionable in the riding habit as well. The bodices continued to be tightly fitted and the sleeves



Figure 12. 1885

were the lef-of-mutton style, giving the broad-shouldered look that the 1890's are known for. The top hat returned as the most often worn hat but without the veil of the past.

During the 1890's and 1900's, as reformers began to advocate rational dress for women, the riding habit became an issue of concern. The strongest argument against the long, full skirts was that of the danger of falling and being dragged by a hanging skirt. This danger is illustrated in Figure 13. To reduce the risk of falling and being dragged along, the safety skirt was designed. There were actually three styles of safety skirts. The "apron skirt" (Hill, 1903, p. 263; Beach, 1912, p. 108; and Fleitman, 1921, p. 235) was cut away on the side next to the horse so that when the lady was mounted, her legs were in direct contact with the saddle and horse. This type of skirt was fastened along the right leg above the knee with buttons and had a strap which passed under the right knee, one that passed under the right foot, and another under the left heel to hold the skirt in place. When walking, the lady buttoned the side up onto her hip so that the lower edges hung evenly. (Figure 14) In case of a fall, the rider would be freed from the saddle.

The "half apron" (Beach, 1912, p. 110) was similar to the apron in that it had an opening, but rather than having buttons and straps, it was tucked under the rider's

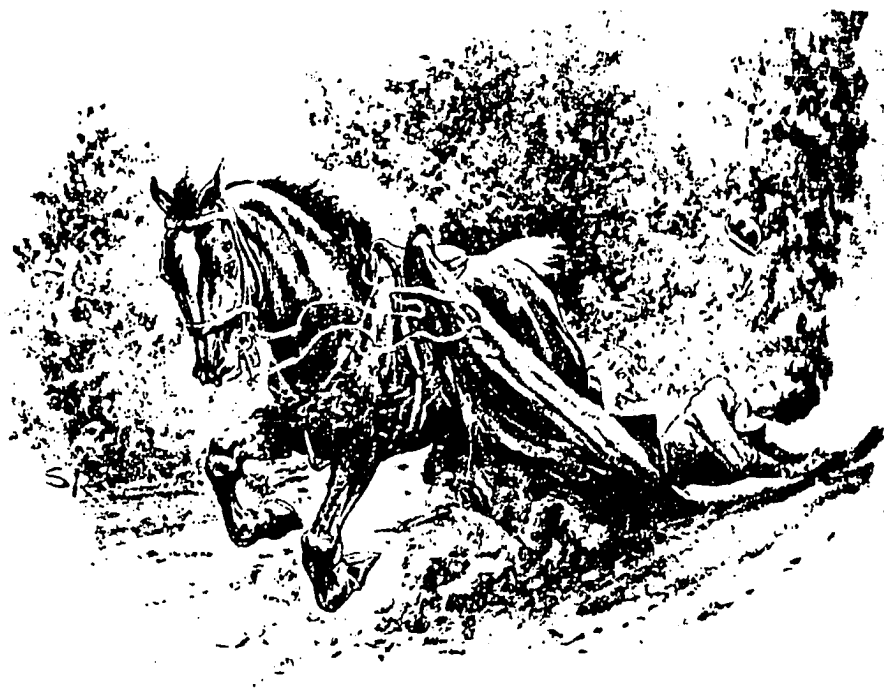


Figure 13.

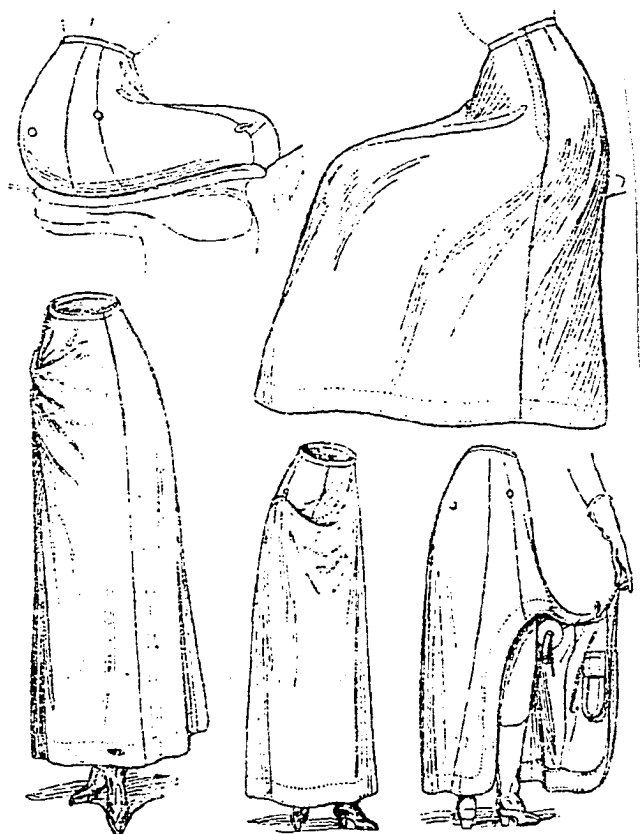


Figure 14. 1910

thigh. It had no provision for closure when off the horse, thus looked absurd.

The third style of safety skirt was more like a regular habit skirt but had a seam that was open, either in the back (Hill, 1903, p. 264) or on the right side (Beach, p. 110), from the knee down and fit around the pommels. It had "patent fasteners" (Beach, p. 110; Hill, p. 264) that allowed the skirt to be closed when the lady rider was off her horse, and easily opened when she was preparing to mount.

The jackets or basques continued to be tight fitting, were single breasted with revers, and were made long enough to touch the horse in the back. Stock collars were most common, worn occasionally with a jabot.

The hat seen most often in Ladies Home Journal, Harper's Bazar, and The Delineator during the early 1900's was the derby in winter and the straw boater in summer. The tricorne hat enjoyed a brief popularity but was not considered by most to be "generally becoming" (Hill, p. 266).

As women began to ride astride there were gradual changes to the skirts and jackets. At first skirts were made divided "with enough fullness in each side to give it proper appearance on the horse, but with the lines of a good walking skirt" (Delineator, December, 1912, p. 486). There were two methods of covering the split. One was

a panel that buttoned in the front and could be unbuttoned when riding, but when buttoned, resembled any normal skirt. The second style had a panel with two rows of buttons. Both rows could be unfastened to remove the panel altogether, or one left fastened allowing the panel to be lapped over one leg when riding. (Figure 15)

Riding trousers, or breeches, continued to be worn under the divided skirts. They were baggy at the top and fastened just below the knee with buttons or lacings. A few daring ladies began to throw caution to the wind and brave the ridicule of society by removing their skirts and riding in only the breeches and jackets. These breeches were the forerunner of the jodhpurs that were common in the 1920's.

The jacket worn with the riding breeches was a concession to the still remaining propriety. It was long and had a center back seam open from the waist down, allowing it to fall on either side of the horse like a skirt. Most were made with an invisible closing which, when buttoned, kept "the pieces from separating when walking" (Delineator, March, 1910, p. 200). It was designed to button to the breeches when a lady was mounted to keep it from flapping. The lady might be riding astride, but she was still covered as much as possible!



A GOOD MODEL for cross-saddle riding; the skirt is a divided one with two or three in-turning pleats.

Figure 15. 1906

With shorter skirts and uncovered breeches, the riding boots became even more important to the outfit. There were two major types. The most common was a high, stiff boot, much like a man's boot. The other was a softer, looser boot, much like a jockey's boot, that was more comfortable but "offered scarcely any protection: (Beach, 1912, p. 123). Both styles of boots were made with loops in the back that were buttoned to the breeches or attached to "garters" on the coat to keep the boots from "slipping down and the breeches from slipping up, and from twisting" (p. 125).

As outer wear for riding began to change, so did the underwear. The tightly laced corset worn for riding began gradually to become looser and smaller. With the jackets being longer and looser, corsets were designed to give more comfort and freedom. The appearance of being laced was to be entirely avoided.

Bicycling Dress: 1885 to 1920

The costume considered proper for a woman to wear was the subject of more literature, more discussion, more argument, and more difference of opinion than any other phase of bicycling. Modesty was pitted against serviceability, morality against attractiveness, and conservatism against progression.

In 1885 women wore their everyday clothes to ride. The skirts were long and full and the petticoats hampered the lady riders. Mrs. Charles Bates, a columnist for Outing

(Smith, 1972), advocated the restriction of the number of underskirts to as few as possible. She also promoted the wearing of a suit of woolen underwear as added protection from the cold. In March, 1888, Peterson's suggested that the style of dress worn for cycling should be "one with rather wide kilts, which gives room to move the limbs without restraint. The bodice must be cut loose enough to give freedom to the arms" (p. 295).

By the early 1890's bicycle riding had become very popular and clothing began to change. The skirts were long, gored and flared, and gave a very graceful appearance when on the bicycle. They were flat in the front but had side and hip fullness. With these skirts women wore shirtwaists (blouses) with large, full, leg-of-mutton sleeves and high, throat-encasing collars, severe in line yet feminine in trim. Both the sleeves and collars were trimmed with laces and ribbons. The one concession to riding was to remove the trim and wear simpler, more tailored shirtwaists. Belts were often worn to emphasize the waists. They were fastened below the waistline in the front to give a long bodice look but followed the natural waistline in the back. When belts were not worn the shirtwaists themselves were cut to give the appearance of a long front waist. To complete the ensemble, ladies wore boater hats, sometimes referred to as sailor hats, and high button boots.

The long skirt and petticoats continued to present risks and dangers to the safety and comfort of the cyclists. They blew in the wind, caught in the gears, and, according to columnist Dennison (1891), pumped air against the abdomen.

Creative ladies solved some of the problems by putting lead weights in the front hem of the skirts or by sewing on elastic loops to be slipped under the feet. By 1892 they were shortening their skirts by about two inches, all the way around or just in the back. Others attached four straps, arranged to look like ornaments, at equal intervals from the waist. A short distance below each strap there was a button to which the straps were attached to shorten the skirt about six inches (Porter, 1890).

Because the petticoats also caused problems, riders began to limit them to one or two and wore equestrienne breeches under the skirts. Like the ladies who rode horseback, lady cyclists wore these breeches in colors to match their skirts.

The year 1892 found the bicycle extremely popular with women, and dress reformers used it to encourage what became known as rational dress. "Absence of self-consciousness" (Merington, 1895, p. 703) had characterized the women who cycled from the very beginning so it is not surprising that simplified, more masculine attire quickly entered the scene. Shorter skirts were worn over knickerbockers of matching

fabric. The knickerbockers were full over the knee and gathered just below it with an elastic band. Long leggings or gaiters were worn with low cut or ankle high shoes.

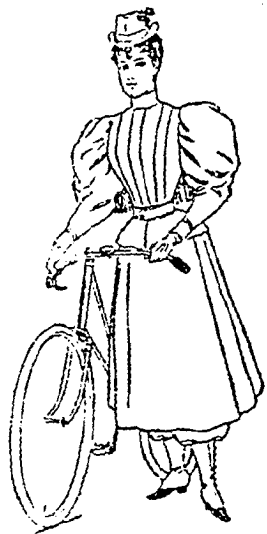
(Figure 16)

During the early '90's there were several suits designed especially for cycling. The "Empire Suit" (Montaigne, 1896, p. 437) had a divided skirt with a flap in the front that was fastened to each side with buttons and deep pleats in the back that fell together when the wearer was standing. The jacket was an open fronted coat worn over a tailored shirtwaist. (Figure 17) A similar suit, known as the "Luey Suit" (Neesen, 1899, p. 68), named for the designer, had a very full divided skirt that fell together in both the front and back when the wearer stood, completely obliterating the division. (Figure 18) Both of these suits greatly facilitated the movement of the legs yet made a graceful appearance.

There were also divided skirts that resembled Turkish trousers. They were split part way up the front and back, sewn to resemble full trousers, and were gathered to fit snugly at the ankles. An innovative style had the back of the skirt lined in leather in order to prevent wear.

(Figure 19)

It was the long, full divided skirt, gathered at the ankles, that evolved into the garment known as bloomers. The bloomer costume had first been introduced in 1851 as



SKIRT OVER KNICKERBOCKERS.

Figure 16. 1890

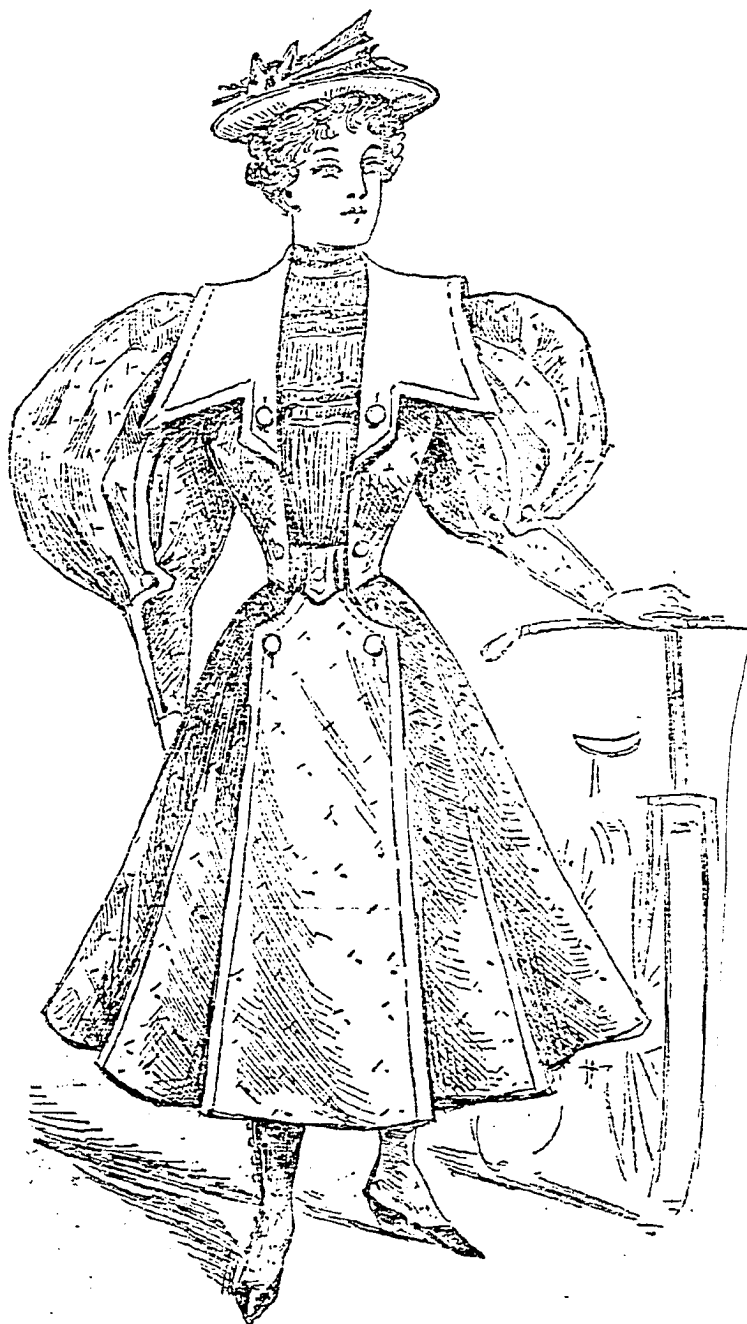


Figure 17. 1890



Correct Position—Luey Costume—Loop Frame Wheel—Droop
Handle Bars

Figure 18. 1899



DIVIDED SKIRT.

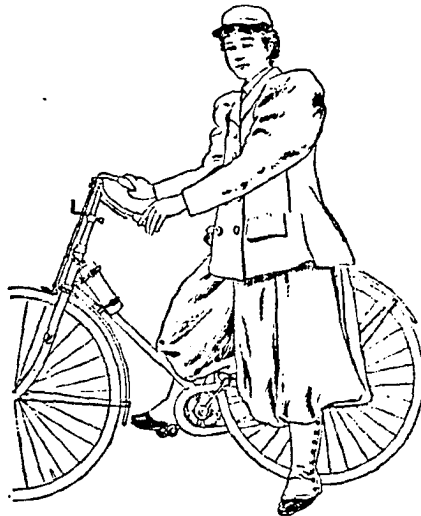
Figure 19. 1890

a fashion for the entire society. It was named for Mrs. Amelia Jenks Bloomer, a feminist and editor of the magazine The Lily, because she so strongly advocated its adoption. Because she promoted the costume through her magazine, her name became irretrievably attached to it. Bloomers were a wide, bifurcated garment extending from the waist to the knee where there were bands to fit just below the knees. (Figure 20) This type of outfit would seem entirely appropriate to present-day Americans, but to a generation that had definite ideas about women who showed their legs, the bloomer costume was a monstrosity. Bloomers represented trousers, and trousers, to nineteenth-century Americans, represented manhood.

The new bloomer costume was a hit with lady riders, nevertheless, and they were quick to accept the new skirtless style. It was reported (Smith, 1972) that by the summer of 1895 a "fluttering roly-poly avalanche" (p. 100) of bloomers had descended on cycling America.

The majority of society did not accept the bloomers as readily as the female cyclists. Ladies who wore the bloomers were considered by most of society to be immodest. There were a few men who spoke out in favor of the bloomers, however, believing them to be appropriate for the sport. Garrigues (1896) wrote:

This garment [the bloomer], combined with a waist and leggings, forms a neat, practical dress for a woman rider. True, it is at present ridiculed and even



BLOOMERS.

Figure 20. 1890

condemned by some as immodest. However, before men say anything against the decency of bloomers, they had better reform their own trousers which are not much more decent and becoming . . . it is hard to understand what objection there is in the name of modesty against a piece of wearing apparel that by its wide proportions entirely hides the outlines of the body. (pp. 283-284)

Neesen (1899), House Surgeon at the Woman's Hospital in New York State and a member of the Physical Education Society of New York, agreed that "The present . . . costume . . . is the most serviceable and becoming that could be created. It consists of . . . breeches called bloomers, terminating in a wide band just beneath the knee" (p. 14).

As bloomers continued to be worn in the later 1890's they were accepted and became as much a fashion as any skirt. They were made of rich fabrics, such as velvets, and worn with matching jackets, vests, and ties. Gaiters of matching fabric were an important part of the ensemble, as were leather gloves. (Figure 21) In a form that was somewhat shorter and less voluminous, the bloomers were referred to as knickerbockers or "high water pants" (Smith, 1972, p. 101). This version was often worn with golf socks and low cut shoes rather than gaiters and ankle high boots.

It seems that the bloomer style, like any other fads and fashions, had run its course by 1898. It began to slowly disappear but rational dress in the form of the shortened skirt did not pass away.



Figure 21. 1894

The bifurcated bloomer costume was not the only garment to attract concern during this time. Corsets for riding became a topic of discussion and debate as well. Some women began to go without their corsets upon discovering the fact that their ease of movement was hindered. Neesen (1899) explained to women that wearing corsets while exercising did indeed cause damage:

The stomach and spleen are pushed upward and backward, against the heart, interfering with its action. The liver is pressed upon and pushed upward, diminishing the space in which the lungs expand. The intestines are crowded down on the pelvic organs, which are liable to be displaced, and the pressure on the large vessels causes a stagnation of blood in the valveless veins of the sexual organs - a potent cause of many of the ailments peculiar to women. (p. 69)

Porter (1890) believed that corsets could be and should be worn, but loosened. He believed that for women who had always worn corsets to suddenly take them off would be "quite as injurious as to wear even too tight ones" (p. 111).

Riding corsets for horseback were adopted by some women who chose to continue wearing them. Manufacturers of riding corsets began also to advertise for bicycling in the fashion magazines. The Ferris Brothers Company advertised in Ladies Home Journal (May, 1900) that:

The perfect poise of the woman who wears a Ferris waist is easily distinguishable. She rides with easy grace because every motion, every muscle is absolutely free. She rides without fatigue because she enjoys perfect respiration. Ferris's Bicycle Corset Waist is constructed with elastic sides which yield to every motion of the wearer. The hips are short and pliable, the bust is made to

give support without restriction. Every woman who rides a wheel or horse, should wear the Bicycle Corset Waist. (p. 33)

Gage Downs advertised their bicycle corset as "the most sensible garment ever made" (Ladies Home Journal, June, 1896, p. 28) and described it much like the Ferris Corset.

Knowing that women would not abandon the corset entirely, Dr. Neesen (1899) encouraged the removal of corsets for riding and putting them back on after completing the ride. Many women continued to wear corsets for riding, but it was during this period in history that the demise of the corset altogether began.

Cycling and the bloomer costume were significant for women because they focused attention on issues surrounding the females' role in society, their problem of dress, their participation in sports, and society's notion of femininity. The female cyclist was a symbol of the New Woman who was mobile and independent. But this was only the beginning. Women continued to wear the symbol of their femininity, the skirt, into the twentieth century. The bicycle craze died down and by 1920 bicycling was no longer the most popular sport for women. Those who continued to cycle wore the shortened skirts, jackets or sweaters, tailored blouses, gloves, hats, and oxford type shoes. Cycling costumes were no longer criticized for society had begun to accept the changing role and changing dress of the American woman.

Swimwear: 1850 to 1920

There is a definite lack of documentary evidence for the forms of bathing costumes worn during much of the nineteenth century, and it is difficult to determine just when they were developed. For the time period researched, the earliest mention of bathing dresses was in 1856. Victorian propriety required women to be completely covered and these earliest samples of bathing dresses were voluminous in comparison to those worn by 1920. It is no wonder that female bathers only walked into the water and enjoyed very limited activity.

The bathing dress of the 1850's consisted of a "pair of drawers and a skirt" (Peterson's, August, 1856, p. 145). The skirts reached to about three inches above the ankles. The drawers, made of the same fabric as the skirt, were moderately full, were gathered to a band at the ankle, and were finished with a ruffle. The drawers were to be fastened securely to the ankles so that "even if the skirt washes up the person cannot possibly be exposed" (p. 145). The dresses were made with deep yokes, pleated or gathered to the waist, and attached to a moderately full skirt. The waist was confined with a belt. The sleeves were loose, gathered onto a cuff having a deep ruffle to protect the hands from the sun. Often a cape, called a talma, was worn to completely hide the figure. (Figure 22)



Figure 22. 1856

The fabric used for the bathing dresses was usually wool flannel. The colors most often worn were gray, dark blue, and brown. Collars, capes, ruffles, and skirt hems were trimmed with crimson, green or scarlet braid. A bather's hair was confined in an oil silk cap over which was worn a straw bonnet. The only mention of shoes was in Peterson's (1856) and those were gum overshoes.

The bathing dresses of the 1850's, when compared to the fashions of the day, seem to have amused some of the writers. One writer, in 1857, declared that:

We don't think a man could identify his own wife when she comes out of the bathing house. A plump figure enters, surrounded with a multitude of rustly flounces and scarcely able to squeeze an enormous hoop through the door. She is absent a few minutes, and presto change! out comes a tall lank apparition, wrapped in the scanty folds of something that looks more like a superannuated night gown than anything else, and a battered straw chapeau knocked down over the eyes, and stalks down towards the beach with the air and gait of a Tartar chieftain! (Frank Leslie's Illustrated Newspaper, August, 22, 1857, p. 182)

A week later another writer said he felt that he:

must say - even in the columns of Frank Leslie's Illustrated - that they don't look very picturesque or pretty Rather limp, sacks tied in the middle, eel bottles, hydropathic coalheavers and 'longshoremen', and preternaturally dilapidated Bloomers, would appear to be the ideals aimed at. (August 29, 1857, p. 197)

The use of the term "Bloomers", referring to the long full trousers, is a reminder of how similar the bathing dress was to the reform costume worn in 1852 by Mrs. Amelia Bloomer.

During the 1860's the style of bathing dresses remained much the same as in the previous decade with the exception of length and color. Illustrations in Godey's Lady's Book and Peterson's show that the skirts were raised to about knee length when worn over the bloomers, and about midhigh level when worn with straight leg trousers, looking much like modern pajamas. (Figures 23 and 24) The fabric was wool flannel and colors for the costumes continued to be blue, gray and brown, but more often illustrations showed purple, scarlet, white and lilac trimmed with contrasting braid. Occasionally, as seen in Figures 23 and 24, the dresses were made of striped fabric. Oil silk caps and straw bonnets continued to be worn, along with ballerina type slippers.

During the decade of the 1870's the bathing costume began to change, both in style and volume. The bodices and skirts became slimmer, requiring only "from eight to ten yards" (Peterson's, August 1870, p. 147), the neckline dropped, and both the sleeves and drawers were shortened. In 1873 a column on New York fashions reported that even though the lower necklines and shorter sleeves were becoming popular, it was best "to provide an extra pair of long sleeves that may be buttoned on or basted in the short puffs that are sewn in the arm holes. Sometimes a small cape fastening closely about the throat is also added" (Harper's Bazar, July 19, p. 451).

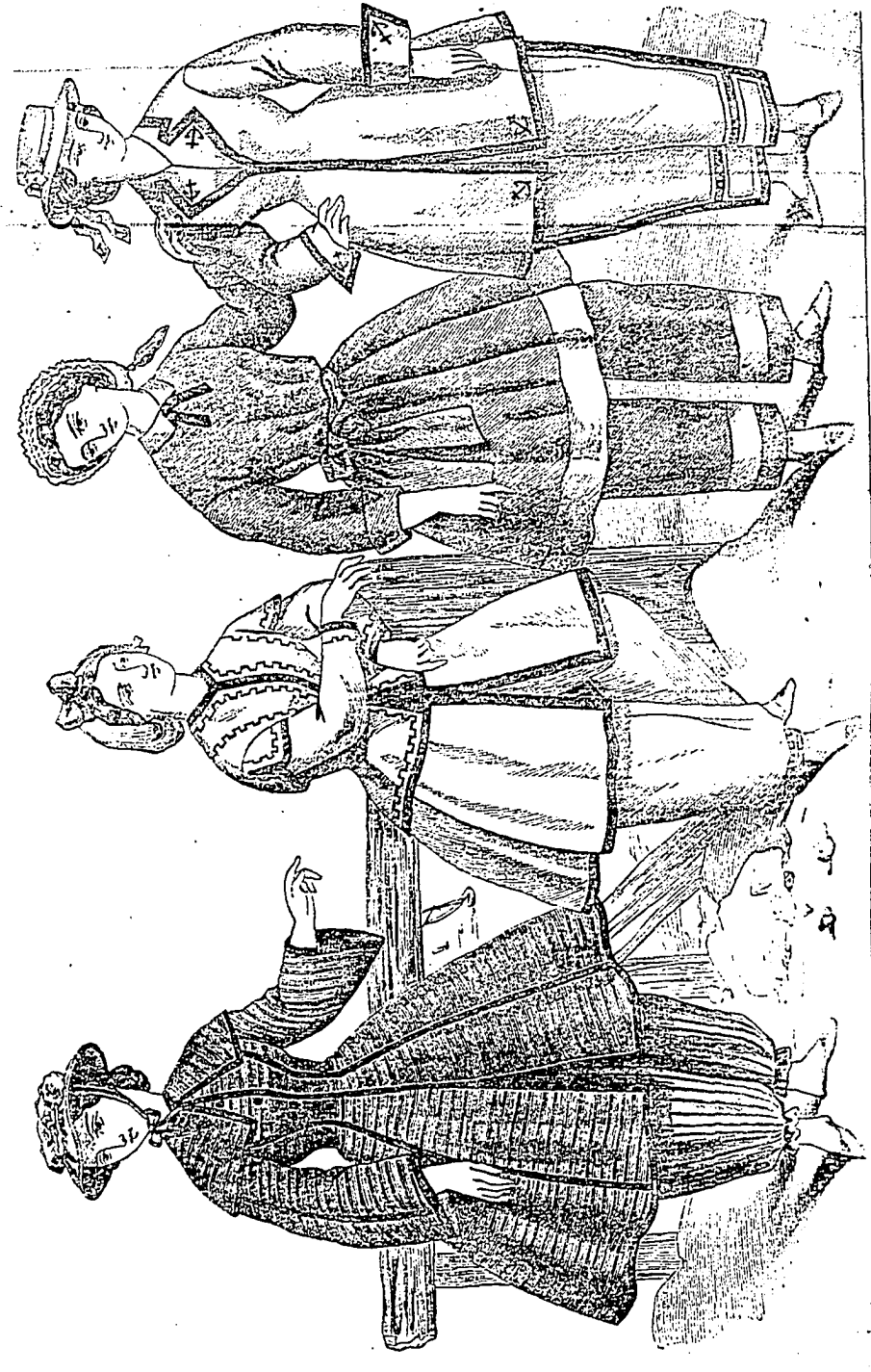


Figure 23. 1864

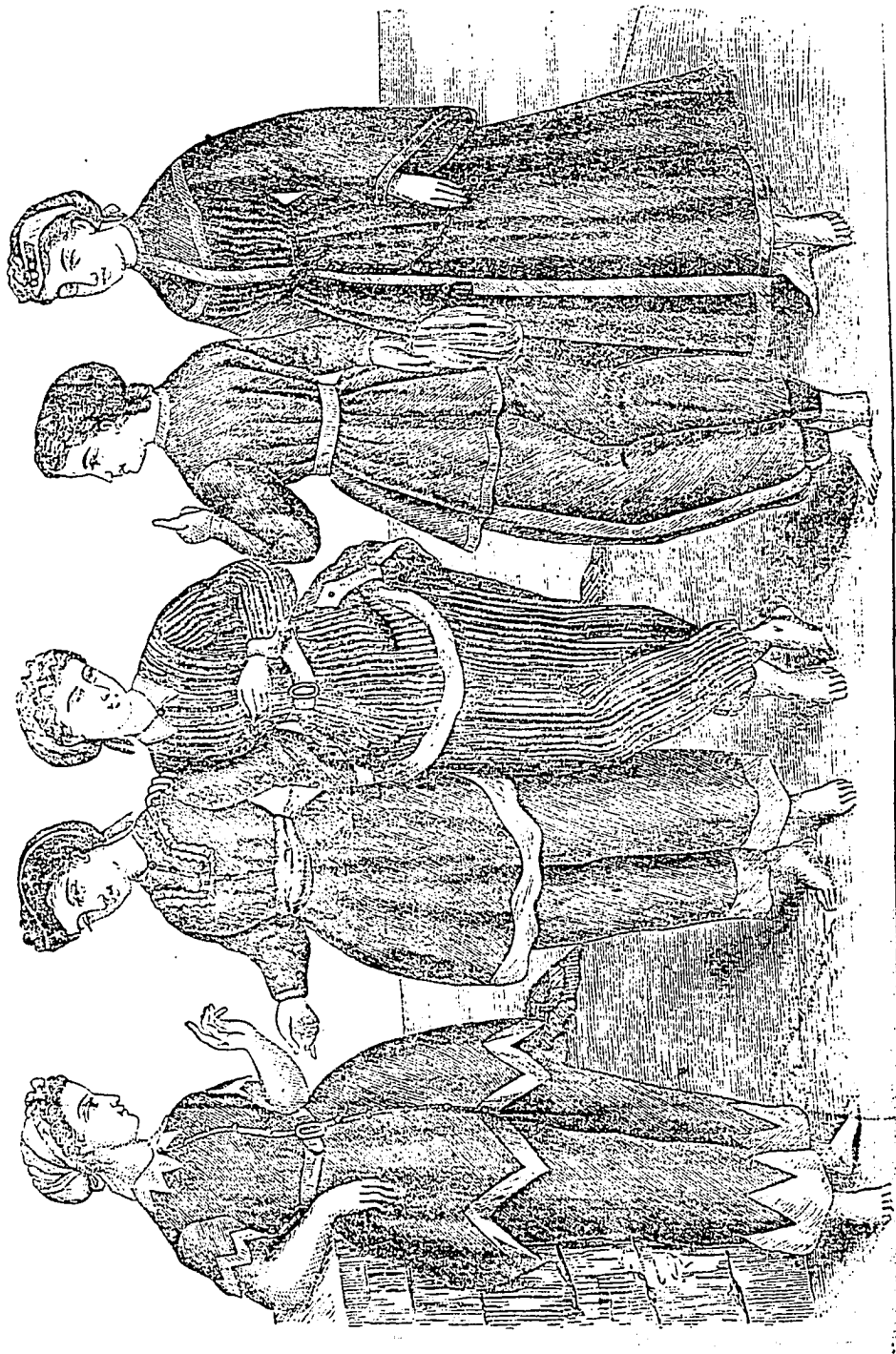


Figure 24. 1868

Wool flannel was most frequently used for bathing dresses, with serge being recommended, as well. Blue was the most popular color of the 70's with white and maize also being common, all in solids or checks trimmed with white, red, gray, or blue worsted braids.

Oil silk caps continued to be worn, but some ladies began to wear their hair long and loose, wearing only the straw bonnet to shade their faces. Bathing shoes or slippers became more common as can be seen in the following figures. The most functional shoes were "high baskins of thick unbleached cotton duck with cork soles" (Kidwell, 1968, p. 20) tied around the ankles with worsted braid. Slippers for walking on the sand were mules, or merely toes and soles of flannel sewn to cork or straw soles. A pair seen in Harper's Bazar were described as being:

made of pink flannel, embroidered with black silk in buttonhole stitch, and bordered with a braid of narrow flannel strips three quarters of an inch wide. The sole is made of straw braid an inch wide, and covered with a piece of flannel lined with cotton batting. (July 2, 1870, p. 421)

Throughout this decade the social aspect of bathing was more important than bathing for medicinal or therapeutic reasons, and women began to make attempts to transform their bathing garments into more functional and attractive outfits. The presence of men on the beaches and the competition with other women for the male attention caused the ladies to be concerned with style and trimmings. Thus bathing dresses

joined the ranks of other fashions in the fashion magazines, even being seen on front covers, as in Figure 25.

In the 1880's most women continued to wear the same style bathing dress with the belted blouse and skirt topping a pair of trousers or drawers. Wool flannel and serge were used and colors were blue, gray, white, and maroon, with navy blue being by far the most common. A writer for Peterson's (July, 1880) discouraged the use of white because it "has the disadvantage of soiling soon with the dirty seaweed" (p. 84) .

Long stockings, usually black, became part of the bathing costume to counteract any indecency achieved by the shortened trouser legs which reached just below the knee. Nautical trims and sailor collars became fashionable as did small ruffles and bright red trimmings.

An innovative alternative to the bathing dress, known as the princess style, had been introduced in 1879 and became popular with the bathers of the 1880's who desired more functional clothing. The princess style was made as "one continuous garment that envelops the entire figure, to which is added a skirt that drapes and conceals the limbs. The waist and trousers are cut in one piece" (Harper's Bazar, July 10, 1879, p. 445). This new style developed from the "princess underclothing" (p. 445), known



Figure 25. 1879

as the "combination" (Kidwell, 1968, p. 21), which consisted of a chemise and drawers in one piece. Two examples of this style were shown in Peterson's (August, 1884) with one being described as "a bathing costume . . . of navy blue flannel, bordered with white braid. The drawers are attached to a petticoat waist, and . . . is all in one piece" (p. 169).

Sleeves continued to be long or short, to suit the wearer's preference. The fashion columnist for Harper's Bazar in 1885 (July) reported that:

The sleeves may be the merest 'caps' four or five inches deep under the arm, curved narrow toward the top, and lapped there or they may be half-long and straight, reaching to the elbows, or else they may be the regular coat sleeves covering the arms to the wrist. With the short sleeves it is customary to add the sleeves cut from a gauze vest to give the arm some protection from the sun. (p. 427)

Short full trousers, reaching just below the knee, accompanied by knee length or shorter skirts, became the fashion for the 1890's and were referred to as bathing suits. (Figure 26) As the trousers grew shorter, long stockings or tall shoes were necessary to cover the lower part of the legs. The stockings, of cotton or wool, were usually black but were seen in other colors to match the costume. A variety of shoes and slippers were worn to protect the feet. Shoes were usually made of canvas, most often in white. Slippers were held on by braided lacings up the leg. A



Figure 26. 1890

gaiter shoe, a combination stocking and shoe, was made of waterproof canvas, laced up the sides, and reached almost to the knee.

Caps were made of either oil silk or waxed linen. Rubber caps with large crowns and wired brims were also common. Straw hats continued to be worn over the caps to protect the bather's faces from the sun, and colorful turbans, tied on over the caps were popular.

Navy blue, white, ecru, maroon, black, gray, and olive green were fashionable colors. A fashion writer for Harper's Bazar (July 5, 1890) let it be known that "black bathing suits are worn as a matter of choice, not merely by those dressing in mourning" (p. 523) as had been true prior to this time.

By the mid 1890's the drawers, now called knickerbockers, were shortened to be completely covered by the knee length skirt. They were either attached to the bodice in the princess style or were fastened at the waist with flat buttons.

During this same period, knitted cotton tights were introduced to take the place of the drawers, or knickerbockers. They were straight rather than gathered at the lower edge and were a separate garment unattached to the bathing dress. These tights aided considerably in attaining more functional clothing.

As with street dress, corsets seem to have been necessary for maintaining the proper posture. It was reported in Harper's Bazar (June 13, 1896) that:

Unless a woman is very slender, bathing corsets should be worn. If they are not laced tightly they are a help instead of a hindrance to swimming, and some support is needed for a figure that is accustomed to wearing stays. (p. 503)

By the early 1900's, some of the bathing dresses were made with boning to eliminate the need for a corset.

Flannel was no longer recommended as the best choice for bathing suits. Serge was used most often with the addition of a new fabric called mohair. It consisted of cotton warp and mohair or alpaca weft. Bathing costumes of silk were most impractical but were often worn by the very elite.

Throughout the nineteenth century bathing costumes slowly evolved into practical and functional clothing. As the popularity of bathing--immersing the body in water--increased, and then as actual swimming--the activity of propelling the body through water--became acceptable for women, the yardage decreased in bathing attire evolving into costumes suitable for swimming. By the 1900's many women had taken up swimming as a healthful exercise and a recreational sport, but bathing continued to be most prevalent.

Very few references to "swimming" costumes could be found in the fashion magazines. Occasionally a line or two using the word swimming in columns on bathing attire were found. One such comment was found in Harper's Bazar in the preceeding quote concerning corsets. In May, 1910, a bathing suit was described in The Delineator as having short sleeves that "are more practical for the swimmer" (p. 409); in May, 1912, another bathing suit was said to have "a shorter swimming sleeve" (p. 407); and in June, 1915, a suit was described as "very comfortable to swim in" because "the waist is sufficiently loose and does not restrain the arms" (p. 62); in June, 1916, a bathing costume was described, in an article entitled "For the Modern Mermaid", as having all the "features essential to a practical swimming suit." The blouse and bloomers were made in one piece with the skirt being detachable giving "absolute freedom for their strokes" (p. 52).

There were writers who implicitly discouraged swimmers from wearing the fashionable bathing suits for swimming. In The Woman's Book of Sports, Paret (1901) was very specific in the requirements he thought were suitable for a swimming costume:

It is particularly important that nothing tight should be worn while swimming, no matter how fashionable a dress may be for bathing. The exercise requires the greatest freedom, and a swimming costume should never include corsets, tight sleeves, or a skirt below the knees. The freedom of the shoulders is the most

important of all, but anything tight around the body interferes with the breathing and the muscles of the back, while a long skirt--even one a few inches from the knees--binds the legs constantly in making their strokes. (p. 74)

Edwyn Sandys, in the chapter on swimming in Hill's (1903)

Athletics and Outdoor Sports for Women, said:

The greatest difficulty the female [swimmer] has to encounter is found in the costume which that all powerful factor, custom, has declared she must wear Anything more absurd and useless than the skirt of a fashionable bathing suit would be difficult to find. (p. 97)

Marshall (1915) in an article for The Delineator entitled

"Swimming for Safety and Health", stated:

if it were possible for me to dictate the style of suit I would say emphatically 'Tights!'. But since the world is not yet converted to the methods that stand for 'Safety First', one must bow to conservatism. Voluminous skirts are dangerous because they impede action and add weight Next to tights my suggestion would be knee length tights worn under a short princess dress (p. 24)

These statements illustrate the dichotomy between swimming suits and bathing suits and between fashionable styles and functional styles.

An important factor in the development of swimming suits was the participation of women in competition. In 1909, Adeline Trapp, a 20-year-old Brooklyn school teacher, wore a one-piece knitted suit when she became the first woman to swim across the East River in New York, a feat performed as part of the Life Saving Corps' campaign to encourage women to learn to swim. There were dozens of men who also swam, but she was the only woman and received considerable

publicity. Her suit had been ordered especially for her from England, and was considered scandalous.

Annette Kellerman, Australian swimming champion, had as a child discovered the extraordinary comfort and freedom in a one-piece knitted suit designed for boys, and continued to wear it as an adult. She won her first competition at age 15 in Australia, but her fame came later in England and America. In England she swam 17 miles down the Thames and became an overnight success. Knowing she could not appear before King Edward VII with bare legs, she sewed black tights to her black swimsuit, creating a new style. It became an immediate success and was known as the "Annette Kellerman" (Adler, 1980, p. 2). It was worn under the traditional bathing dress. When she came to America in 1907 she appeared in Boston at Revere Beach in her famous suit and was arrested for indecent exposure. She later reported that the arrest was part of her publicity campaign.

During the decade from 1910 to 1920 there were two distinct types of bathing suits available to women. There was the customary bathing suit style, now made of taffeta, satin, wool jersey, cotton, and peau de soie as well as serge and mohair, with short skirts and hidden bloomers. There was also the loose straight suit, developed from the chemise dress of the period. It had no fitted waist, usually was sleeveless, and was worn over bloomers.

Even though women were beginning to swim more often, and writers discussed the need for streamlining the suits, the only knitted, simple suits found in the magazines were in advertisements. These suits were not considered a part of fashion and were not pictured for that reason. Those seen in the advertisements were either one piece or two, had a skirt that was very short, being about four or five inches shorter than the legs, and they were sleeveless, usually with a built-up underarm area. It was this type of suit, much like the ones Annette Kellerman and Adeline Trapp had worn, that became so prominent in the 1920's, complimenting the image of the newly emancipated modern woman.

Atlantic City held its first bathing beauty contest in September, 1921, and a few daring ladies wore the body-revealing suits causing the spectators to gasp aloud. By 1923, however, the revolution in swimwear had gotten so far along that most of the entrants wore the skimpy suits. Figure 27 shows the contestants as they lined up before the judges.

Tennis Dresses: 1874 to 1920

In the early years tennis was played in a slow-moving leisurely way and ladies wore their ordinary street clothes for playing. The dresses of the 1870's were made with tight-fitting bodices, along slender skirts that made even walking difficult much less playing tennis, high collars,

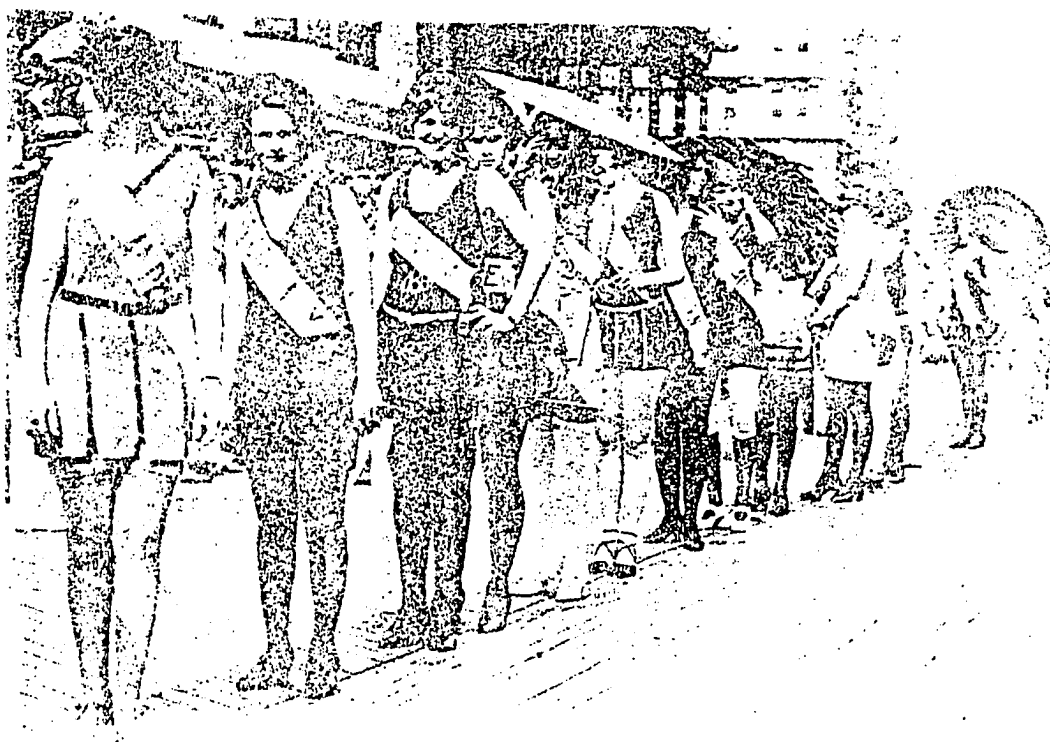


Figure 27. 1923

and long, tight sleeves. Big hats were also worn. There was little moving about, not only because of the dresses, but because ladies were expected to play within the confines of genteel female behavior. They were required to maintain proper decorum and circumspection befitting a Victorian lady. Their play consisted of patting the ball back and forth over the net.

The earliest illustration of a dress labeled as a lawn tennis dress was found in the August 20, 1881 issue of Harper's Bazar. It was designed with a cuirass bodice, long sleeves, and a polonaise skirt. The bustle supported large flowers as did the straw bonnet. In the July 1, 1882 issue of the same magazine, a description of the appropriate lawn tennis dress was given as:

The Jersey waist is liked for lawn tennis dresses, and the full box pleated skirt is sewed to the edge of the waist, just below the hips, with an erect heading that gives sufficient finish, and dispenses with a scarf or sash drapery. The Jersey waist may be of woven wool, or it may be of the material of the skirt, made in the Jersey shape, that is, fitted smoothly over the hips, without a wrinkle, and has a plain collar and turned over cuffs as its only trimming
(p. 403)

Simplicity was not the norm, however, as can be seen by the dresses in Figure 28.

During the 1880's the fabrics for tennis dresses varied. Striped cottons became popular, especially in blue and white, and sateens, serge, flannel, and muslin in pastel colors were all commonly used fabrics. A fabric known as "tennis



Figure 28. 1884

cloth" became popular as well. It was a "new Scotch material in soft fine wool in all the pretty delicate shades to be found in the Scotch gingham, and is made into entire costumes for tennis . . ." (Peterson's, May, 1887, p. 479).

By the 1890's the dresses had advanced somewhat from the Victorian ascendancy of the 1870's to greater freedom of movement offered by the shirtwaist and skirt. They were simpler, less decorative, and, like bicycling and riding costumes, were more masculine in design. The skirts were long and flared without the bustle, and bodices were tightly fitted with stock collars sporting a tie or jabot and leg-of-mutton sleeves. Straw bonnets with flowers or plumes continued to be worn but the masculine boater or sailor hat was most often worn. (Figure 29)

Mable Cahill, an American female champion, described for Ladies Home Journal (July, 1893) the type of dress she most preferred. The costume was to have:

A plain skirt made quite full behind, though a little spare in front, with a loose sleeved and commodious waist attached, the two being united by an easy fitting belt of ribbon an appropriate tennis costume is made of some light colored wash goods, such as duck or cheviot, which may be stiffly starched . . . [or] dark skirts of some woolen fabric, and bright blouses of silk or linen . . . though the skirts of wool are not preferred. White pique is perhaps the prettiest and most serviceable of goods worn by tennis players The sailor hat affords more protection In the matter of shoes . . . I suggest the use of an oxford tie in tan
(p. 4)



Figure 29. 1893

White was the most common color for the dresses and the fabrics were starched stiffly to prevent any limp or soft fabrics from hugging the body and revealing the female form.

By the turn of the century women players were advocating shortening their skirts. The long full skirts presented the danger of falling and receiving an injury. The skirts also prevented the players from getting across the court fast enough to make a point and caused unnecessary fatigue in a game that by this time required staying power. Miss Toupie Lowther (1903), an avid player, who desired a change in dress, said she was not for "rational costumes, but . . . there is no reason why [players] should not wear short skirts, well above the ankles, unless . . . the ankles of some of them happen to be unusually large . . . [in which case they should] keep to the 'training garments'!" (p. 133).

Elizabeth Moore, the American Ladies' Champion for 1896, 1901, 1903, and 1905, described her clothing as "lawn dresses with leg-of-mutton sleeves, sailor hats and ornamental tennis shoes. My dresses, which were of white lawn, swept just clear of the grass on ordinary shots, but brushed it when I stooped" (Aberdare, 1959, p. 125). Mrs. May Sutton Bundy (1931), the first American to win at Wimbledon, described the clothing she wore in 1904 and

1905 as skirts that were "much too long [with] too many petticoats" (p. 112). The skirts did not rise to above the ankles until about 1910, as shown in Figure 30.

As in other sports, the corset became a controversial issue for tennis players. Not only were they uncomfortable and restrictive, they were also dangerous. Brisk movements could break the steel or bone stays of the corset which could then cut or stab the players. After a match it was not uncommon for the corsets of the players to be blood stained. Nevertheless, no proper lady would appear on the court unless "upholstered with a corset" (Wagner, 1931, p. 108).

During the years 1910 and 1920, women became more and more conscious of the need for freedom and facility in tennis wear. Corsets were abandoned and skirts were not only shorter but were also less full. The most common length was four or five inches from the ground and the most common style was a gored skirt that fit smoothly over the hips and flared at the hem giving adequate fullness for running. Occasionally pleated skirts were seen.

Tennis dresses were most often made of two pieces. The bodices, or shirtwaists, were middie style with V shaped necklines, small collars and ties. Sleeves varied from raglan to the regular shirt type. In 1905 May Sutton (Bundy) had shocked all of England when she appeared at



Figure 30. 1910

Wimbledon with her sleeves rolled back, but by 1920 short sleeves exposing the female arm from elbow to wrist was almost common.

Fabric for the skirts and blouses were serge, flannel, and cotton, with cotton being the most common. White was almost the only color worn. According to Bjurstedt (1916) white was the "only permissible color" (p. 152).

Oxford tie shoes, "gymnasium" shoes (Chambers, 1910, p. 66), "sneakers" (Bjurstedt, p. 152), and leather shoes with spiked soles were all commonly worn, with white or dark stockings. As the skirts got shorter, the stockings became more important.

From 1910 to 1920 hats continued to be worn but not as often as in the 1890's and early 1900's. The sailor hat or other small brimmed hats were often replaced by a veil or a headband.

There were ladies who, unlike the serious players, continued to be "dressed for the tennis court and not for tennis" (Bjurstedt, p. 151). But for the most part, by 1920 clothing for tennis was separate from ordinary wearing apparel. Made of lighter fabrics that were washable and allowed ease of movement, it was a great improvement over the elaborate dresses and fancy hats of the earlier days.

Golf Dresses: 1889 to 1920

When ladies first appeared on the golf course their clothing was colorful, frivolous, and voluminous. Clothing so constricted the players that links with shorter distances to the holes were established because it was impossible for the ladies to master a full swing.

The hour-glass shape was the desired fashion of the 1890's, and to obtain this shape ladies squeezed themselves into corsets stiffened with whalebone and steel. To their constricted waistlines were added long, full skirts, layers of petticoats that touched the tops of their shoes, large puffed sleeves, and wide belts. A hat and gloves completed the costume.

As women began to participate competitively a sort of uniform developed. It consisted of:

hats, heavy leather boots, and layers of fabric that made it seem astounding that they were able to swing a club at all.

Long cloth or tweed skirts reached from their waists to their ankles. Underneath was an assortment of petticoats, also touching the shoe tops. Blouses with full length sleeves had starched collars around which ties were draped. Over the blouse it was fashionable to wear a bright colored jacket carrying the club emblem on the breast pocket. On the ladies' feet were heavy shoes; some wore boots with metal tackets. On their heads were broad-brimmed hats, held in place by hat pins or veils tucked under the chin. Around their waists were heavy leather belts with buckles. (Grimsley, 1966, p. 204)

When club jackets were not worn capes known as golf cloaks were common. Figure 31 shows such a cloak made of wool and having straps inside that encircle the figure and



Figure 31. 1893

hold it securely in place while thrown back over the shoulders.

As was true of other sports fashions, the clothing for golf began to take on a somewhat masculine look by the mid-1890's. The skirts had fewer frills, the blouses were usually white and had high collars under which ties were worn in a bow, ascot, or four-in-hand style. (Figure 32)

On windy days the long full skirts had the tendency to either obscure the view of the ball or to obscure the swing of the club. Wilson (1961), in A Gallery of Women Golfers, told of a Miss Higgins who started the practice of binding the skirts around the knees. A wide elastic band was worn around the waist, and when needed, was slipped down to a point between the knees and ankles holding the skirt out of the way. This practice gave the wearer the appearance of a "Georgian pepper pot or an onion upside down" (Harris, 1953, p. 63).

A new fashion that developed in the early 1900's for women golfers was the cardigan sweater, worn over the blouse or shirtwaist, or over another sweater. This cardigan was known as the golf jersey. Cardigans were made of jersey knits that easily stretched and were thin and warm. One such sweater pictured in Ladies Home Journal in October, 1907 was waist length and worn over another sweater having a turtle neck. A similar sweater seen in

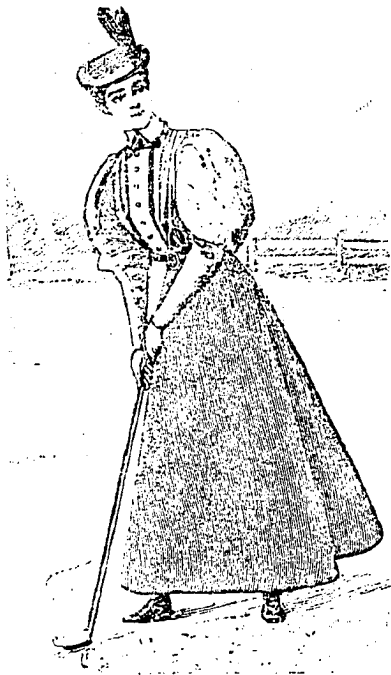


Figure 32. 1896

the February, 1908 issue of the same magazine was described as having a ribbed collar that "is deep enough to turn up high over the ears, if the weather makes this protection necessary, while the deep turned back cuffs, also ribbed, are as warm as wristlets" (p. 31).

Other than the development of the cardigan sweater, golfing fashions changed very little until about 1914. Skirts stayed at ground level and jackets, sweaters, and shirtwaists remained tailored. By 1914 skirts began to shorten and were so narrowly cut that they prevented players from taking full strides or a wide stance.

Skirts designed especially for playing golf were made so that they buttoned at the ankles and could be unfastened to give additional width. Jackets became longer and looser, offering more freedom of movement. Sleeves were straight, often made in the raglan style. Hats of differing styles continued to be worn. (Figure 33)

With the loosening of the clothing many ladies were putting aside their corsets. Not all were willing to, however, and corset manufacturers and fashion editors continued to promote the use of sports corsets. A Ferris Brothers' ad in Ladies Home Journal (June, 1917) said of their corsets, "her body is free from rigid restrictions, her movements are easy and graceful. She wears a FERRIS WAIST" (p. 31). A corset recommended for golf was



Figure 33. 1914

described in The Delineator (February, 1916) as being "low in bust, short in skirt, lightly boned and with a generous use of rubber to allow for violent swings" (p. 50).

Cardigan sweaters, or golf jerseys, continued to be worn throughout the teens. They changed from short, waist length to hip length or below. They were designed with regular sleeves as well as raglan sleeves. Often they had V shaped necklines and deep cuffs.

Popular colors for golfing fashions were greens, yellows, blues, and khaki. Fabrics were wool flannel, serge, tweeds, cotton pique, jersey, and cotton suiting. The cardigans were made of wool or cotton.

By 1917 skirts were almost to calf length, as seen in Figure 34, and by 1920 they were just below the knee, as can be seen in Figure 35. As skirts shortened shoes became more important, and usually white or black tights were worn to cover the legs. Oxford shoes, ankle-high canvas shoes, and low-heeled ankle shoes of leather were the most common.

By 1920 golf fashions were a little simpler and continued to be more so into the twenties. But the early days of golf for women required that they participate weighted down by their clothing which prevented them from being able to play as successfully as the men. Even so, women continued to strive forward in a world that had been originally reserved for the men.



Figure 34. 1917

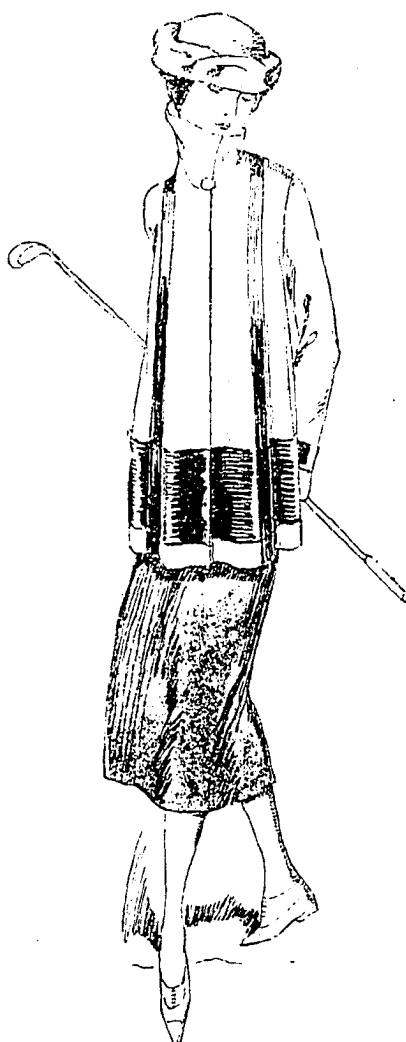


Figure 35. 1920

Women who were pioneers in cross riding, bicycling, swimming, tennis, and golf were both hampered and endangered by the voluminous styles of clothing that were fashionable in the mid-nineteenth century. Added to the multiple layers of skirts and petticoats was the restriction of tightly laced corsets. Freedom of movement was impossible.

As the women of the middle and upper classes began to participate actively in leisure sports, the need arose for more functional and comfortable clothes. Riding horses astride and the riding of bicycles created the need for bifurcated garments. Full skirts evolved into divided skirts, then bloomers or Turkish trousers, knickerbockers, and breeches. Tennis and golf were responsible for the shortening of skirts and sleeves to allow for greater movement. The practice of swimming rather than bathing created the need for the development of tighter, body-revealing garments that allowed women more freedom to use their limbs actively in the water. All of the sports were instrumental in the need to loosen or remove the corsets which contributed tremendously to women's freedom of movement.

Sports fashions became simpler, more tailored, and rather masculine in comparison to women's everyday wear. They were tailored both for comfort and as a symbol of

equality. The new styles of dress for sport participation were a continual and unavoidable reminder to society that a new age had dawned for women.

CHAPTER V
SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Summary

During the second half of the nineteenth century a great many changes took place in American society. The population expanded as a result of immigrants arriving with the hope of finding a better life. Factories, mills, and new industries developed throughout the United States due to rapid industrial development. Communication was transformed by telegraph, electricity, and the telephone. Railway travel was possible from coast to coast. An awakening interest in health and exercise developed and was promoted by reformers and physicians. In the midst of all these societal changes, women's life styles also changed and so did their fashions.

The story of women in sports from 1850 to 1920 tells much about the social status of women during that time. The nineteenth century was a time when women were being placed on a pedestal to be admired, while simultaneously being kept in a kind of bondage. The Victorian concept of the ideal lady was conformed to by the middle and upper-class Americans, and women were under great pressure to behave accordingly. Ladies were to be as attractive as possible.

passive, obedient to their husbands, and circumspect in their behavior at all times. By avoiding exercise and cultivating a pale face the appearance of gentility was achieved. Women were sheltered and insulated from the world, thus making the home the only place where they held any importance. Although the pedestal was never entirely toppled, the social, political, and economic bondage was shaken by the end of this time period.

The women who participated in sports did so under trying conditions since there was a certain amount of social scorn and stigma attached to women who participated in sports. In the minds of the majority, sports were for men only and any woman who participated in a masculine sport would deprive herself of womanly character. Added to this belief was the general idea that women were biologically weaker as well as emotionally and physiologically frail. There were doctors who advocated that exercise for women was healthful and would cure disorders that were common to women during the menstrual years. But as women passed the point of exercising for their health and began to participate with intensity, the effect of the medical issues became negative and inhibiting. The most common objection from a medical point of view was that participation in sports would have negative results during childbirth. With these strong sociological and biological pressures opposing them,

it was remarkable that women were able to make strides in an area of society previously inhabited only by men.

The beginnings of women's participation in sports appeared during the 1860's and became more apparent as the century closed. The primary purpose of early sports for women was the opportunity for a respectable social encounter with men. But as the nation became health conscious, women were encouraged by doctors to participate in sports as a form of healthful exercise. The sports which had the greatest impact on middle and upper class women and their fashions during this early period were horseback riding, bicycling, swimming, tennis, and golf.

Riding had long been socially acceptable for women. As long as they continued to ride side saddle with skirts covering legs and feet completely, as propriety demanded, there were no objections from society. When safety became an issue as the result of ladies falling from their horses and being dragged behind, the skirts took on different shapes. Skirts were designed with a recess for the knee and the apron or safety skirt was developed, but there were no more concessions to the skirt's purpose than in the earliest years. The development of the safety skirts was based on the appearance of a seated rider, sitting sideways, with a skirt that must cover the legs completely. The most drastic change occurred toward the end of the nineteenth century when women who were influenced by the Woman's

Suffrage Movement began to ride astride. Society was shocked that ladies would dare to display such a lack of modesty and become so conspicuous. Skirts were divided and breeches, long worn underneath the full skirts, were revealed for the first time. Jackets lengthened, however, becoming long enough to cover the rider's legs when astride, making a small concession to propriety. The lady might be riding astride but she remained completely covered.

The activity that had the greatest impact socially on woman's sports participation and dress was bicycling. Bicycling was the first sport that had mass appeal in America. Most bicycles were reasonably priced and could be easily obtained by women of modest means. Bicycling as a sport was the only one of the five sports reviewed to begin in the ranks of the masses and then rise to popularity among the wealthy. Bicycling also received the most opposition from society. To ride a bicycle was a challenge to Victorian mores. Riding created independence and freedom for women without sanction. Riding a bicycle demanded physical exertion when it was thought women could not stand the strain. Bicycling also required radical attire where modesty and conservatism was the custom. The women who braved the stigma attached to athletic women and rode their bicycles helped to dispel the beliefs that the middle and upper-class woman's place was only in the home.

The necessity to loosen or remove the corset while riding contributed to women's freedom. The wearing of short skirts and Turkish trousers, or bloomers, aided women's dress and social reform as well. Women who were sympathetic to the Woman's Suffrage Movement used bicycle dress to encourage "rational dress." The reformers believed that fashionable dress was not only dangerous to their health but a hazard to pregnancy as well. The bloomers disappeared by the turn of the century but the shortened skirt remained, an accomplishment reformers had been striving for for generations.

Resort and sea bathing were enjoyed by women during the nineteenth century, but swimming was a sport solely for men. Bathing dresses usually consisted of tunics and trousers, which were much less voluminous than women's street clothes but were not functional for swimming. Actually, the bathing dresses were quite hazardous. Not only did the fabric itself, usually wool, add weight when wet, but the long sleeves and skirts impeded any action of the arms and legs.

By the end of the century women were being encouraged to learn to swim for safety and good health. As women gradually began to participate in swimming, swim dresses began to change in fullness and length and finally became more functional in the water. The influence of Annette Kellerman and her body-revealing suit caused quite a

disturbance but eventually affected swimwear for the masses. The fitted suit and tights were much more comfortable and functional for swimming. However, the suit, a sleeveless top with knee-length pants and black tights, was worn under the accepted bathing dresses until the 1920's.

Lawn tennis was a sport that from its beginning in America was considered socially acceptable for women. The sport had, in fact, been introduced in this country by a woman, Mary Outerbridge. Tennis required little activity at first, being played in a slow-moving, leisurely way, and could be enjoyed while wearing everyday clothing. In 1881, when the United States Lawn Tennis Association was established and the English rules were adopted, play became more strenuous creating the need for simpler and more comfortable dress. Corsets and long skirts with petticoats were hazardous for women who ran after balls or swung a racket swiftly. The heavy skirts hampered leg movement and caused unnecessary fatigue. Corsets were not only restrictive and uncomfortable but often caused injuries due to broken stays. As women began to participate in a more serious way, tennis dress took on a more tailored style with blouses and skirts being simplified. Fabrics used were light-weight wools and cottons that were starched very stiffly in order to prevent the fabric of the skirt from hugging the body and revealing the female form. White was the most common color worn and became the color

for tennis attire. Corsets were abandoned and skirts were shortened during the second decade of the twentieth century.

Golf came to America in 1888 and was considered to be a man's sport. Private clubs developed and gradually the wives ventured out of the clubhouses onto the links and began to play. The first women's amateur championship was held in 1895 with 13 contestants. Corsets and skirts so restricted their swings that the distance from the tee to the cup was shortened for women, a practice that continues today.

By the mid-nineties dress for golf had become more simplified and tailored. The most important change for golf fashions, other than loosening and abandoning the corset, was the development of the cardigan sweater, known as the golf jersey. The cardigan, worn over a blouse or another sweater and with a skirt, gradually became general casual wear. This sweater was the first sports fashion of the 70 years reviewed to be worn for any purpose other than sport participation.

By 1914 hemlines began to rise above floor level and skirts were so narrowly cut that walking became difficult. Skirts were designed with buttons at the ankles and could be unfastened to give additional width. By 1917 skirts were almost calf length and by 1920 hemlines were just below the knees making skirts for golf the shortest for any

of the sports. As the skirts shortened, tights or colored hose became more important as a last concession to propriety.

The Victorians had been correct to assume that women had to be kept in their homes in order to preserve the ideal. However, by 1920 the American public had changed its concept of the ideal woman. With the increase in women students and workers, the increase in the belief that suffrage symbolized the equity of the sexes, and the "New Woman" model presented by the successful suffragettes, the Victorian ideal of the perfect lady had begun to give way to a more modern view of woman's place in society. As Americans awakened to the need for exercise as a contributor to good health, leisure sports activities became acceptable for women. The new styles of dress worn for participation in the leisure sports were a symbol within society that the Victorian mold had been broken and a new age for women had begun.

Conclusions

The purpose of this study was to show how the change of role and status for American women during the years 1850 to 1920 was reflected in the fashions worn for participation in leisure sports. Two specific objectives related to this study were to determine the social changes that influenced the acceptance of women's participation in sport, and to determine how sports fashions stylistically developed for

each sport. Some interesting conclusions can be drawn from the events that were reviewed.

It was stated earlier that fashion has historically been used to reflect and seal change, but it is difficult to know which came first, the style or the altered role. This statement is true for the development of sports fashions. The degree of women's emancipation in sport from 1850 to 1920 is difficult to appraise. To swing from almost complete abstinence in 1850 to full participation in several sports by 1920 does seem to indicate a tremendous growth in the acceptability of sports activities for women. Yet, if compared to the changes that have occurred for women since 1920, those early years can be viewed as the formative years of sports participation and costume change.

Although there were many social changes that led to the acceptance of women's participation in sport, there were four major categories that encompassed these many changes: the Woman's Suffrage Movement, dress reform, the awakening health issue, and education and employment for women.

There were various issues that made up the Woman's Suffrage Movement. Women wanted equality in work, in economic status, and the right to vote. The movement influenced women to assume an active role in society by becoming a part of life outside the home. Those who were influenced the most by the movement were the women who

rode astride the horse, adopted bifurcated garments for bicycling, wore tailored and somewhat masculine clothing for participation in tennis and golf, and actively swam in fitted suits and tights instead of the heavy wool bathing dresses.

Dress reform was actually a controversial issue that grew out of the Woman's Suffrage Movement. Objections to dress styles were partially based on feminine health and safety. Reformists were concerned with the hazards of tight lacings, heavy petticoats, and long, inhibiting skirts. Rational dress was deemed necessary for women to have the freedom to function successfully. The bloomer costume was supported by reformists as being practical and convenient as were bifurcated garments for horseback riding and swimming.

Throughout American society, during the last half of the century, there was a growing interest in health. Doctors began to advocate both the removal of the corset and exercise as a means of achieving good health. Many believed that exercise would prevent or cure various ailments suffered by women such as menstrual disorders, headaches, varicose veins, sleeplessness, backaches, and tuberculosis. This consensus in regard to health problems led to considerable encouragement by doctors for women to take part in sports.

Educational opportunities for women were expanded during the second half of the nineteenth century. This increased knowledge and freedom of thought awakened in women a desire and opportunity to express their own ideas. By the end of the century women who chose to work outside of the home, retained their own wages, and thus achieved a new level of economic independence. Both education and work took women out of their homes and allowed them to become an economic, political, and social force in society.

The fact that forceful women were breaking out of the Victorian mold by participating in sports was a reflection of the greater struggle for rights which culminated in the national right to vote in 1920. Prior to acquisition of this right, which affected all women everywhere, most of the societal strides forward had occurred in large cities or in educational institutions, for middle and upper-class women only.

It was essential for new styles to emerge before women could function effectively in active roles. The development of new dress forms for sports participation was based on a general need for both freedom of movement and revealment of the legs, both of which were reluctant changes. All of the sports--horseback riding, bicycling, swimming, tennis, and golf--became so strenuous that freedom of movement became important enough for women to eventually abandon their

corsets and wear less voluminous skirts. Sports fashions became tailored both for comfort and as a symbol of equality. The sports of horseback riding, swimming, and bicycling called for the development of bifurcated garments in the forms of trousers, breeches, knickerbockers, or bloomers. The bifurcated styles did not pass into general fashion, however, until the 1920's.

The statements were previously made that fashion can be used to mirror and seal a changed role, and that a fashion for a new role indicates the acceptance of the role change. During the last half of the nineteenth century and the early years of the twentieth century, women's role in society expanded. As the role change took place fashions became less restrictive. At times the fashion not only conformed to the new role but scorned all tradition as well. As a part of the expanding role, sports participation became important. New fashions were necessary for women to participate actively in riding cross saddle, bicycling, swimming, and playing tennis or golf. The fashions that developed for each of these sports were an integral part of the ongoing message to society that the participants had discarded the passive Victorian role for an active and contemporary one. Thus, sports fashions did reflect the change in role of American women in society during the years 1850 to 1920.

Recommendations

An historical study is valuable in understanding changes in clothing in the past, how they affected the present, and implications for the future. This study concentrated on changes in dress for sports participation as a reflection of the changing role of women in society. Other topics that would be of value are the following:

1. A continuation of the sports fashions during the 1920's, since that was a time of great change, or from 1920 until the present.
2. The development of sports fashions for other sports played during the same time period or at a later date. Of special interest might be sports within the area of track and field and special events in swimming for women and the development of lightweight fabrics for dress for these sports.
3. How sports fashions developed into "everyday wear", "town wear", or "street wear" of today.
4. The development of and need for occupational dress for women in the work force.

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FIGURE CAPTIONS

Figure 1. Crinoline petticoat worn under fashionable dresses as seen on fashion poster from the Victoria and Albert museum.

Figure 2. Carriage or visiting dress seen in Harper's Bazar on July 17, 1896. Taken from Blum, 1974, p. 17 with permission from Dover Publications, Inc., New York.

Figure 3. Visiting dress seen on the cover of Harper's Bazar on June 8, 1872. Taken from Blum, 1974, p. 53.

Figure 4. Ladies' suit as seen in Harper's Bazar on August 11, 1877. Taken from Blum, 1974, p. 111.

Figure 5. Visiting dress seen in Harper's Bazar on February 5, 1887. Taken from Blum, 1974, p. 190.

Figure 6. Spring dress seen in Harper's Bazar on February 29, 1896. Taken from Blum, 1974, p. 270.

Figure 7. Reception gown of lace over satin seen in Harper's Bazar in April, 1906, vol. 40, no. 4, p 292.

Figure 8. Spring dresses seen in Harper's Bazar in March, 1914, vol. 49, no. 3, p. 7.

Figure 9. Riding habits seen in Godey's Lady's Book in August, 1856, vol. 52, p. 189.

Figure 10. Riding habit seen in Peterson's in March, 1862, vol. 41, p. 270.

Figure 11. Riding habits shown with Caladonian, turban, and top hats in Godey's Lady's Book in March, 1865, vol. 70, p. 291.

Figure 12. Riding habit seen in Peterson's in February, 1885, vol. 87, p. 123.

Figure 13. One of the dangers of riding side saddle, seen in Physical Culture in July, 1900, vol. 4, p. 332.

Figure 14. Diagram of a pattern for a safety riding skirt seen in The Delineator in April, 1910, vol. 75, p. 304.

Figure 15. Riding habit for cross riding seen in Harper's Bazar in April, 1906, vol. 40, p. 296.

Figure 16. Skirt over knickerbockers worn for bicycle riding. Seen in Porter, 1890, p. 110.

Figure 17. Empire Bicycling Suit seen in Godey's Lady's Book in April, 1890, vol. 132, p. 442.

Figure 18. Luey Bicycle Suit seen in Neesen, 1899, p. 68.

Figure 19. Divided skirt for bicycle riding. Seen in Porter, 1890, p. 112.

Figure 20. Bloomers for bicycle riding as seen in Porter, 1890, p. 113.

Figure 21. Bloomer bicycling suit seen on the cover of Harper's Bazar on April 14, 1894. Taken from Blum, 1974, p. 266.

Figure 22. Sea bathing dresses seen in Frank Leslie's Illustrated Newspaper, September, 1856, p. 16.

Figure 23. Bathing dresses of wool flannel seen in Godey's Lady's Book in July, 1864, vol. 69, p. 95.

Figure 24. Bathing dresses of wool flannel seen in Godey's Lady's Book in July, 1868, vol. 77. p. 97.

Figure 25. Flannel bathing dresses of improved style and trimmings seen on the cover of Harper's Bazar on July 19, 1879, vol. 12.

Figure 26. Bathing costumes of wool serge seen in Godey's Lady's Book in August, 1890, vol. 121, p. 159.

Figure 27. Bathing beauty contestants wearing bathing costumes. Seen in Rogers, 1949, p. 41.

Figure 28. Lawn tennis costumes seen in Godey's Lady's Book in July, 1884, vol. 109, p. 22.

Figure 29. A tennis gown of white hopsacking, seen in Harper's Bazar in June, 1893, vol. 26, p. 509.

Figure 30. Tennis dress seen in Harper's Bazar in September, 1910, vol. 44, p. 552.

Figure 31. Golf cloak seen in Harper's Bazar in June, 1893, vol. 26, p. 509.

Figure 32. Shirtwaist and tweed skirt seen in Harper's Bazar in May, 1896, vol. 29, p. 464.

Figure 33. Golf fashions seen in Harper's Bazar in May, 1914, vol. 49, p. 57.

Figure 34. Golf dress for early autumn, seen in Harper's Bazar in July, 1917, vol. 52, p. 60.

Figure 35. Golf suit by Lanvin, seen in Harper's Bazar in April, 1920, vol. 55, p. 87.